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MANSOUL

(Or, THE RIDDLE OF THE WORLD)

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TO THE MUSE OF BRITAIN

Maestro al canto
Altro io mon ebbi che me stesso; e un Dio
Leggiadre istorie sempre al cor m' inspire.

Odissea xxii., 347.*

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Paul the Aged.

* *Trad. Maspero.*

BOOK I

THE MUSES GARDEN

MANSOUL

BOOK I

As chanced I sate on terrace of an house,
In summer season, after sickness past ;
And fell, surprised my sense, into deep trance :
Wherein meseemed, much musing in my thought ;
I cogitations heard, of many hearts ;
That came and went, in MANTOWNS market-place,
Whereon I looked. And in my spirit I asked ;
What were indeed right paths of a man's feet ;
That lacking light, wont stumble in Worlds murk.

One called and I beheld in looking up,
Of divine stature, Britains Foster-Muse !
With eyes of living light, as stars of God.
The same was she I saw, which erst me taught,
Mongst Colin's crew, to sound a tuneful reed,
On Alban's hills, amongst my herding feres.
Her blissful Voice, anew me bade to rise,

And follow forth.
O'er uplands wide, o'er hills'
Uneven ranks, Her divine footsteps led.
Nor tarried She, nor once looked back, nor spake.
Last almost spent my spirits, in so long course ;
When Sun gan, stooping low, withdraw his light ;
And shepherd's star shine out with silver crest ;
Her divine Presence faded from my seeing.
Swart-veiled, approached stern Goddess of the Night ;
Standing, in gryphon-drawn, swift-wheeled iron charet,
Erect ; She ebbing Tide o'er-rides of Light ;
And shortly war-slain shrouds, neath Earths cold breast.
Then all waxed dark, save that the Gods have set,
To shine eternally, in heavens hollow coast ;
Stars' infinite watch, their witness to all wights.

Mine Islands Muse, had led me to Worlds brinks ;
That likewise might receive, recovered health ;
My soul new strength.
Come morning ray at length ;
I saw one Minimus walk, in dewless bent ;
That bitter only brackish herbs brings forth ;
Which stiffened lies, in Summer drought, as bronze :
What rests, is drizzling dunes of lifeless sand.

In that Sun-stricken inhuman wasteful ground ;
Which no man passeth through, nor way is found ;
Nor shadow is, in days heat, of any cloud ;
He, blackened in the Sun, an anchorite,
A son of Peace ; had sometime sought Life's Path ;
If haply he might there hear Celestial Voice.
Whence purged, from false Illusions, of base flesh ;
His spirit might attain before his death,
Unto heavenly vision.
Slow of limb, forwatcht,
And dull of sense, forwandered the long night ;
He neath mute stars had laid him down at length :
And on wild craig-stone, pillows now his head.
Methought I heard, whiles Minimus slumbers fast,
The Muses voice, saying, One henceforth my spirit
Should be with his.

Was later in my trance ;
When Suns great eye flamed, Lamp of all the Earth,
With withering heat, o'er that sered idle dust :
I heard, hoarse murmuring tumult as of Sea
Deeps long-maned wave-rows, beating boisterous ;
And rushing billows like to raging scour
Of ravening wolves ; wide whelming on sea-cliffs.
And creaking-winged mews' clamour, cleping loud,

O'er long fore-shore : and gazing thitherward
viewed,
The uncóuth appearance of Huge Wight, like-
shaped ;
But passing human nature manifold.
Whose substance was not flesh : but thence ascend,
Seemed like strange reeling steep infolding cloud.
Of human souls such multitude He comprised ;
As clustered blebs, some greater and some less ;
We see oft in wind-driven floc of foam,
In day of storm, on some tempestuous strand.
With more than human voice, great MANSOUL
cried :
For This was He, and cited Heavenly Powers.
Might not winds breath, of all the Earth suffice ;
For mortals' sighs, of Worlds long ages past ;
And that which now hath course.
Beat thick my heart,
And me misgave, as still I wondering gazed ;
When letting down his feet, as sea-fowl doth ;
He seemed to light, on brow of yonder cliff :
Where standing, whilst spersed wind-gusts his
great voice ;
He impleaded heaven !

Days light in wilderness ceased ;
Blind Night, without dew-fall, descends anon.

Then saw I, on last twilight ray, star-wain
To Earth down-slide, from mansion of the Gods.
Whence toucht to dim now confines of the World :
Stept HERTHA* forth, Earth-goddess, on Worlds mould ;
Returned then, from an heavenly See She hath,
On mountain top ; where with sky-dwelling Gods,
She EARTH-MOTHER useth daily to converse.
(Of pearl that chariot seemed, She left on ground.)
Though Night Earth shrouds, about Her there is light ;
Save that veils Her majestic countenance such,
Wreathed vapouring mist, as shrouds oft an hills height.
As Hertha incedes divine ; from distaff presst,
Twixt cubit and lithe venerable flank :
She outdraweth and spinneth much carded golden fleece.
And nimble-fingered, multipresent Goddess ;
She eachwhére, (though úneath to be understood) ;
In so wide World, continually weaves thereof ;
The seemly raiment, of all living things.
Immortal words, Her august lips divided,
Tongue of the Gods. Methought the sense in part
As thus, amidst my trance, I understood.

*HERTHA : *Earth Mother Goddess, of the Angles.*

MANSOUL

When I bethink me of my former births :
Whether they go on ground, or fly amidst
The winds of heaven, or in my waters swim ;
I endowed them each one in their several kinds,
As might serve, to fulfilling of their lives.
Last I, child of mine age, brought forth Mans kin ;
Founded, like framed as theirs, his mortal being ;
But more infirm than most : nor clothed his flesh,
With fur or feathers, from skies' crabbéd cold :
When winds blow out and Sun forsakes the Earth,
And rain beats on wood-leaves. In recompense
Whereof ; him mind and speech, to his souls health,
I gave.
Whence then Worlds bitter cries, that cease
Not in mine ears, of human souls undone.
What, and thy days be pain and few, O Man !
Sufficeth thee not, thy mind the Lordship hath ;
O'er all that liveth and moveth upon Earths dust ?
Ceiled with the Glory of Heavens Firmament.

Come dayspring, I Mansoul saw now to hove ;
As cloud before a morrows breath, removes.
I rose up, and meseemed impelled my steps ;
Towards mountain-cleft, where He before had passed.

MANSOUL

Strait which I presently have reached; whose
crooked cliffs,
With legends saw I and with names o'erwrit:
In whose sand, prints were, of passed thousand
feet.
Great Mansoul multivoiced I heard beyond:
Bellowing, From living World, he would descend,
As was ordained, to souls beneath the Earth:
To énquire wisdom, of Worlds ages past.
And HERTHA I heard, goddess grave-voiced,
respond.

HERTHA.

Therein hast thou, O Man, my countenance.
And entrance thou shalt find, by my Caves mouth,
Midst rocks, nigh hand; to them which once were
flesh;
Whose thousand generations dead, laid up;
In that great House of Darkness, rest beneath.
And know, before thine hour thou shalt not pass.
Fear not: those also in my BOSOM sleep.
Moreover I, before thy living steps,
Amidst those storied deeps, will send my Voice.
Guide to thy feet and Guardian of thy life:
Till thou, in hour prefixt, from thence revert.

The valley above, lies parted in two heads.
In that, where led those footprints, Mansoul hoved.
My steps, compelled, in this continued forth.
I reached ascending, soon, large cliff-crowned garth ;
Which smiled embayéd, all with greenness glad ;
Where sliding water-brooks bubbled from white sand.
There washed and worshipped Heaven, with lifted palms :
Discharged was of her sometime weariness,
My mortal sense ; old jarrings of blind flesh,
And souls ignoble fret ; and healed those harms,
Which slay Mans rest, of self-consuming smart.
And having slaked thereat mine eager thirst ;
I slumbered till a turtles' gentle flock,
That feared not yet Mans shape ; folding from flight
Their rattling wings ; lighted on vermeil feet ;
Jetting, with mincing pace, their iris necks ;
With crooling throat-bole ; voice of peace and rest ;
All round about me, at that their drinking-place.
Thence faring upward, towards that waters' source ;
Which, full of sunbeams, gurgles from hid grot,
In ivy-embow'réd mossy steep above :
And oft sunk up, reneweth as oft her course ;
In channels clear ; surging from gilded sand :

I stayed, where pleasant grassy holms depart ;
Those streaming waters, bordered all along ;
With daphne and willow herb, sweet sedge, laughing
robin ;
With woodbind garlanded and sweet eglantine,
And azure-hewed in creeky shallows still,
Forget-me-nots lift our frail thoughts to heaven.
Broods o'er those thymy eyots drowsy hum ;
Bourdon of glistering bees, in mails of gold.
Labouring from sweet to sweet, in the long hours
Of sunny heat ; they sound their shrill small clarions.
And hurl by booming dors, gross bee-fly kin ;
(Broad girded, diverse hewed, in their long pelts ;)
That solitary, whiles there light endureth,
In Summer skies, each becking clover- tuft haunt.

The Sister-Muses' garden hence begins :
Which planted for delight have their own hands ;
With laurel-rose, the long caved brinks beside,
In purple ranks, and midst the pebble streams.
I ascending forth, came to a deep swart pool,
Like liquid flint ; which partly a mirror sheen,
Is else a swimming nap of gracious lilies :
Whose buds and chalice-blosms, so purely white,
Be fairies' drinking-cups : o'er whose broad leaves,
Trip dainty water-fowl, on slender feet.
For faeries' gentle Nation wont to send

Thereto, a yearly solemn embassade ;
Which due obeissnce to the Muses made :
Do, humbly embraced their divine knees, entreat ;
If any fay or elf, by foot or voice,
In the late Moons, unwitting have trespassed
Those sacred precincts, pardon. And their vows
Renew, to observe the goddess-Sisters' hests.
These pluck, and set before the little folk,
Of their ambrosial fruit, then blissful meat ;
And name them guests : and bid them dwell and eat.
In bowers of roses wild, of cinnamon smell ;
Whose long arms, ment with gentle eglantine ;
Wounden with many à withwinds flowering trail ;
Their hands have taught, to lend a sprinkled shade :
The Muses, with the glad-eyed Graces met ;
Dight garlands and weave chaplets for their heads :
When those forwearied, with fond worldly wights'
Discourse ; resort to this delicious place :
Where spring-tide ever smiles, and glad consent
Them greets of warbling birds, from all green boughs :
And naught their sense offends, twixt sand and stars.
A little apart, whereas those streams run slow ;
Are cabans green, shrouded in thicket place ;
Of living hazel boughs and branches knit ;

Wattled with neighbour wooing withy wands.
And there a margent is, of whitest sand :
Whereas sequestered, and all veiled from view ;
They bathe, whenso them lists, their gracious limbs.
Over the wandering streams, lie open lawns
And laurel grove ; and trees there grow beyond,
All other than today in World be found,
Whose plenteous boughs bear, blesséd of the Gods,
Immortal fruits and blossoms at one tide :
Whence flowry fragrant breath is wafted wide
Abroad, with sweetness of the honey-comb.

The Sisters thither, in Sunsetting hours,
Wont to resort, whenas cool rising breath
Is whispering wide ; and linked in lovely wise,
They by those channels shire, in fere, dispace.
Where their soles tread, all flowers again unfold
As to new Dawn ; and amorous clip about
Their divine feet, whereas they hap to pass.
Pale asphodel, jacinth, goldilocks, yellow flags ;
Perfect in beauty, as gems of trembling clay
And living gold.
And sith, their wont it is,
Enranged all sitting on the flowery grass ;
(Smiles gather then each moment on their lips ;
And blossom as the flowers, and fade in bliss :)
That sacred golden-ringed lockt Choir entreat ;

Of deep sweet secret things of Heaven and Earth,
And therein cómmuning with divine insight ;
They deathless lofty numbers meditate,
And songs weave of the Sun ; which well attuned,
To harmony of the spheres, with heavenly voice ;
Lifted from Earth, they íntone all in one.
Whereto bass rumour of the waters fall ;
Whose cataracts poise shakes misty cliffs above,
With bagpipes' drone ; whence seemeth arrayed the World
In sunny hours, with a celestial veil ;
According well, makes ceaseless undersong,
And heard to sound is in the Muses' ears
An harp divine, unwist of human sense :
When pass by, unseen footsteps of the Gods,
On height.
Sisters, that pause a while to rest ;
Somewhiles do reach back their white hands, to taste ;
Of dulcet clusters of the trellised vine ;
Which hang down réady at the hollow brinks ;
And them refresh. Nor seld, in lighter mood ;
They amongst them vie, bathing their twinkling feet ;
Who best can roundels weave, in the cool wave.
Yet otherwhiles, playing on silver wires ;
Singing thereto, some mock in quaint accord ;

Seas hollow surges' fall on sullen strand ;
And grave receding hum, in pebble-stone:
Or Dawns shrill medleyed babble of early birds ;
And Summers breath, ín the bleak poplar leaves.
The Sisters saw I not ; a rainbow path
Saw I remained, aloft their sojourning place :
Whereby they lately were passed forth, to grace ;
(Presence divine !) a shepherds marriage-feast.
Whilst yet I ín that Pleasance roamed and gazed :
Cool rumbling brook, sliding with liquid foot,
Twixt flowery banks ; trembling like watery light :
I came to a fishpool, mirror of clear skies ;
Where wont the Sisters tire their jacinth locks,
And wind them in thick tress : where feed their hands,
A golden scaléd voiceless finny drove.
There, angry at mine intruded stranger foot ;
Knee-deep in water-mints, loose-strife, flowering rush ;
A ruffling swan, proud warden of that plot ;
Plunged from his nest, and vehement breasts outforth.
Ascending fróm that streams glad garden-ground ;
So fair to look upon, mine eyes discerned ;
Neath yonder hanging óf the valleys hill ;
Seven enranged, thrones shining against the Sun
Of marble white. On them the Muses sit ;

When tidings to them from the stars, be brought.
Reached thither, I beheld a sacred wood ;
Environed round with únhewn antique stones :
Where none might enter, not initiate :
In Muses' heaven-derivéd intimate Art.
Voice called me ; and hastily a myrtle grove I passed :
And under sailing cedars' perfumed boughs ;
Wherein were hanging nests of sacred-doves.
Soon, in their midst, a Sanctuary I beheld ;
Not haughty, nor yet lowly ; whose open front,
Embellished was with fretted marble work.
Nor laid mens hands had courses of these walls :
But each stone drawn from craig-stewed mountain-ground ;
Was raised in days of the old Golden World ;
Into its place, as to us delivered is :
By the all-prevailing Sun Gods harmonies.
Therein a glad-eyed priestess-maiden, clothed
In pure white line, on ever-burning hearth ;
An hallowed flame betes, that gleaned sheaf ere was,
Of sunbeams ; whiles yet in Earth-World dwelled Gods.
Whence fuming incense doth embalm his brain ;
Who, a Muses nourseling, can interpret face
Of skies, seas aspect, stars' cold influence ;

And wind and woods' and floods' inanimate voice ;
Lives creatures cries, in whom is pulse and breath ;
And metely endite thereof, in deathless verse ;
Thereto the vestals' consecrated hands,
In daily service, tine the golden lamps ;
Pendent from gilded roof-tree of the House :
Figuring, as stars in dark World, vates' light.
And midst the Sanctuary court, a palm-stem rears,
Which tree-of life is named, her peerless head.
Nor waxeth old, in Suns succeeding years,
The sacred plant ; whose golden mammels bears
The maidens daily meat, ambrosial fruit.
And a broad-leaved fig flourisheth fast beside
The porch ; whose wild wreathed roots, without the walls ;
Drink in their season flinty nourishment ;
Of seldom trickling torrents droughty bed :
Which flows when heavens timely rains descend ;
From eaves and dripping shelves of nigh craig-cliff.

Already I ware was of a Power divine,
Which hitherto had me led. Then like a dream,
Of Dawn with radiance crowned, the Muse of Britain ;
Revealed was wholly to my pensive vision ;

In ivory stall enthroned, immortal bright,
Amidst the Temple-House.
Her pupils shone,
Neath twin bent brows, as Lydian bow conjoined;
As I upon them gazed, like living wells;
Of starry undying light and divine gladness:
Whose subtle streams look, all-confounding forth,
That might in World offend. A fillet binds
Her ringed bright locks, with Britains pearls beset.
Her watchet vesture broidered is, high-girt;
(The bosom sheen upgathered in large lap;
For Virgin-Mother is the foster Muse;)
With silver threads. That precious needle-work,
Figuring wind-kisst field flowers of thé White Isle;
Fell gracious stately-pleated to Her feet;
Hewed as we sea-shells see within appear.
Whereon were laced, with curious device
Of antique art, in purple leathern work;
Buskins, whose shining knops were Albans gold.
I Her reverenced, as uplandish wight behoved
But lest I might offend, no word I spake.
Her lips, like roses budded, I beheld;
Like gate of pearls, the pale-rows of her teeth:
When opened She Her gracious lips to speak.

THE MUSE

Being yet in life, that is so feeble spark,
Which hangeth on daily bread and mortal breath:
Durst thou, in frailty of that thy clayling flesh;
Descend with Mansoul, thou, tofore thy death;
Thou an offspring of dead flesh, in Worlds beneath;
To fearful converse hold, with pulseless spirits:
That in dark Realm of souls forgotten, sleep:
Touching hid knowledge and more perfect paths?

Thereto, must thou all lively cheer forsake,
Thy trade of life, Worlds wonted fellowship:
To be sad guest of HELLS* tremendous House;
Where Time is not: hear rusty ádamant doors,
Of stone, clapt fearful to, behind thy back;
Bars drawn; and still thou to continue forth!

Know furthermore, is Hells Abysm unlíke,
Fantastic dream of any groundling wit.
There unhewn sunless labyrinthine crypts,
And fearful bays, lie ever further forth:
Where, in their thousand generations, sleep,
From all World's coasts, souls after their deserts;
Laid up, deep under deep; more than trees' leaves;
Could they be numbered, and Earths blades of grass.

*HELL: An Anglo-Saxon word, and meaning no more than the hidden or covert place.

MANSOUL

With bowed head, I responded, in my trance ;
Nathless I jeopardy would what few days' life,
May yet to me remain, before I pass :
And might, even darkly, O Foster, I approach ;
To that Chief One, of the eternal mysteries ;
Which hidden is from foundation of the Earth.

MUSE

Seeing that thy purpose deign and worthy is ;
Thou hast my countenance, in thine Enterprise :
But what soul hath returned, from Earth beneath !
One of the precious gem-set ceiléd cups,
Laid up with vessel of the Temples service ;
The priestess fetcht then, as prescribed the Muse ;
And, from a gold-lipped silver ewer, it filled :
And to me from the altar, Her hand brought.
Drink ! quoth the Muse : the sustenance of this cup ;
(From whence exhaled ambrosial sprinkling breath) ;
Shall save thy soul alive, in pit of Death.
The Temple-maiden had aforetime scruzed,
Nepenthe and clary and moly ; herb kinds found only,
In covert place, midst there sequestered rocks ;
A sovereign juice, and mingled in the cup.
When had I tasted of that dívine sap ;

I, in all my being, felt spring new quickening warmth ;
Of virtue to redeem Mans soul from death.
Seemed lose its former poise this fleshly dross ;
And spirit increase, in strength and hardiness :
To steadfastly affront, in Worlds beneath ;
Whatso there might betide.
Whilst reverent yet
I stood before the Muse, Her further speech
Attending with bowed head ; and durst not gaze,
Too rashly on stature above the human mould,
Unveiled ; the vestal from the Treasury brought,
To me unwist, and hanged about my neck,
A gem-stone bright, which shining of itself,
Should light before our steps, in Underworlds voyage.
Nor least, She lady, in taking further thought,
Bestowed on mine unworth, the walking-staff
Which in Her hand ; to úphold in dread paths,
My steps.

Moreo'er, Her voice, melodious ;
More dulcet than was ever shepherds reed :
A croc of nard, set on an aumbry shelf ;
With incense and oil olive, for the wicks ;
Me bade uptake ; and to anoint therewith,

The thrall, wherein my soul is pent, this flesh ;
Come to dark ground of Hell-deeps first descent ;
From living light, at door of dread Abyss.
And thereto do-on also, Her last gift ;
(Which likewise brought the Temple-priestess forth) :
Shroud-like swart Orphic garment, of Worlds grave.
Yet, more than all, (Her divine afterthought ;)
From certain inmost secret sealed recess,
Made in the marble walling of the House,
Unwist : the Muse committed to my trust,
With curious antique diligence, wrapped about,
With many silken cloths ; that master-work,
Above all worth, which sometime Merlin wrought ;
With dwarves which served him, in a bower of glass :
Strange mirror, which those Earth-folk burnished clear.
Therein we might, the sacred Muse me taught :
It deftly wrying, after certain sort ;
Shadowed discern, through mountain-height of rocks,
Dim image of this Sun-kisst Upper Earth :
Our hope in Hell ; to comfort of our hearts.
But sovereign virtue of that the Muses' cup :
Already a vital change I might perceive
Within me wrought : whence I the space henceforth,

Of many days should need no mortal bread.
The priestess sithence turning golden leaves ;
Read from a chapter, as prescribed the Muse ;
Words of the Gods, which might not be rehearsed :
But past Hells voyage, from mind again should fade.
Of power to loose even adamantine bands :
And évoke forepassed spirits, which swoon in death.
The Muse yet spake, Remember ye, which seek
Hid things, with high intent, in Worlds beneath ;
Must warily tread : aye ready, as ye pass forth,
To endure, unknown before extremities.
Other before you, whom no fear might daunt ;
With fervent great desire, the like have sought.
Of whom the most deceived of their souls' hope ;
Have perished midst blind hazard of Hell-paths ;
Seeing hitherto none returned to living Earth.
From ivory see, that saying, the Muse uprose,
Bidding me sue ; and Lady of heavenly birth
She issued forth : and hastily thence we trace.
From that balsamic paradise soon we pass :
Of harmonies full and silver trembling streams.
Whose sound breeds dreamless sleep whose freshing brinks,
Be bordered all with amaranthine flowers
Of orient hews, so blissful to behold.

And there an orchard, whereof who shall taste
Shall live eternally : where, (their hearts desire ;)
Sounds to few chosen ears, the Muses' voice.
And there more quick is found a breathing air
Than in the world without. A garden set,
Midst wildernéss of forlorn sliding sand.
Which chequered, wreathed and weaved in wild cross-paths
Of thousand-footed Earth-riding Spirits of Winds.
But entered cragged place, towards VALLEY-OF-DEATH ;
Cumbered with shapeless quarters of swart rocks ;
Where dívine footsteps might not further pass ;
She stayed and spake :
To Mansouls Underworlds voyage ;
Know, (and hardly I, óf the inéxorable FATES
It yester have obtained, to whom I sought :)
A month appointed is of the Suns days.
Whiles yonder New Moon fills Her horns, increase
Shall your souls' force beneath. What days She wanes ;
They promise (so ye fail not in your faiths) ;
Home-coming, safe from that dread Enterprise.
Thus saying, She deigned breathe on me : and in that seemed
The deathless Muses divine foster spirit ;
Like wafted sunbeams from some primrose bank.

With her last words yet sounding in mine ears.
Celestial, as voice from the holy stars ;
Nourseling, farewell, the Gods thee speed and save ;
Her divine presence faded from my seeing.

Gan, as enforcedly, then my steps to pace ;
Towards mountain-strait, where Mansoul lately passed :
Walled up to skies, where broods eternal Night,
O'er mournful steeps. Swart-leaved wood-shaw I pass ;
Neath crumpled boughs, aye dripping baleful mist !
On sleep-compelling canker-worts beneath,
Black héllebore and rank-smelling déadly dwale
And bryony, and other more, I know not well :
The Furies' garden-knots ; whose snaky entrailed
Locks, wrapped about my feeble knees and feet.
And must I, mortal wight, of few days' life ;
Thy glory, O Sun, great Father óf days light ;
Thy benign warmth, whence kindly life on earth ;
For shadow of deadly Underworld, now forsake !

Gaunt, hollow-eaved, with overhanging rocks,
Is that grim gap ; as stiffened were blown seas
Great rampant folding wave to sudden stone.
Ray it, of heavens wide cheerful light receives,
Uneath, when Worlds clear Summer-day it is ;

And night-time only of some malignant star.
Under that vault, gapes salvage sullen cave,
To HERTHA dedicate; who is Goddess both,
Of living World, ánd dread TARTARUS, Earth beneath.
One of whose glooming caves, in Earths West part,
Is this den in hid cliff, which far-down leadeth;
To Underworlds.
Awhile with foot suspent;
I irresolute stood without, at the caves mouth;
Where Mansoul I beheld, already arrived.
Not such, indeed, as had I seen him erst:
Since thousand souls, too fearful for that Quest,
Hath Mansoul shed. Nor few had fleshly death
In the mean season, 'spersed. In him the rest,
Be flowed together, to one Manlike being.
Calm is his port, his old complaining ceased;
As boisterous seas assuaged, late-frowning, face:
Whereon descended Angel is of Peace.
And this day in proud humility hath HERTHA Goddess;
To parley with Mansoul, Herself abased:
Gracing him; whom She taught, in this grim place;
Faith, Measure, Fortitude and Right-mindedness.

Tangled mongst stinking nettles, wicked herbs;

Cumbered 'midst craigs and briars, as serpents' teeth,
My wounded feet ; I now them wrested forth :
And Herthas vault, derne cave of living rock ;
With Mansoul and with Minimus, have I passed.

BOOK II

THE DESCENT

BOOK II

Though lost days gladsome gleam; Worlds lingering ray,
Shows clustered stony trunks, from floor to roof,
Of HERTHAS cave. Nor were we without light,
Before our further steps.
Had HERTHA, a torch
Bestowed on Mansoul; that a gleaned sheaf erst
Was of stars' rays shed on Her mountain-top.
And it should shine before our halting steps;
In Underworlds dark Voyage, now to begin.
Till to first circuit of those RADIOUS ROCKS,
Where sleep the faithful Dead; whose dust, men laid,
Whom comforts yet the Sun, our feet arrive.
On me and Minimus, had there charge been laid,
Unwist of us (one-twain); that from henceforth,
We on manifold Mansoul should attend; whereof,
We unwitting likewise were least several part.

Bearing forth HERTHAS torch, in glooming cave,
Mansoul led on before us. I held fast
In hand, as we groped forth, the Muses staff:
Whiles more and more the trode, towards dread
Abyss;
Seemed sink and fall away from under us.

Way of the dead, where all day-labours cease;
Is this we living tread, with troubled hearts.
We go down, to be guests of griesly Death;
In HELLS tremendous House, before our deaths.
Full seemed of whispers, each new horrid place:
Phantasms flit forth, before our fearful steps.
Reached to that gallerys ending, derne and still;
That seemed iron closure of eternal tomb;
Revealed was fateful door of massy stone.
There was my weed fell off me of itself.
Whence I, recording precept of the Muse;
Anointed with that Temple-chrism my flesh:
And did-on Orphic garment of Worlds Grave.
Thus shrouded, like to clay-cold corse, I knocked;
With that was in mine hand, the Muses staff,
(As Mansoul bade,) thrice, on that squalid port:
And fearful echoed, living noise in HELL;
And rumbled dread in Region derne, far off.
Reeled on its pivots, that ports rusty mass:
And He who, as had it néver been removed,

Now slowly it revolved, regardeth us !
Loath charnel-breath smote, smother of the grave,
On our lives' sense : an horror of endless great
Darkness of Under-Earth, covered, compassed us.
A fleshless griesly hand laid on the lock ;
That hollow-jowled dread Portent of a wight,
Spake ; *Your Intent ? There enters here no flesh ;*
Herein no lives-way lieth : and narrowly us
He viewed. Some Ruler seemed he of Underworld ;
And ghostly sounds his voice.
For hearts constraint,
Might hardly I utterance frame of faltering lips.
Responding to that Doorward, then I said :
We Wisdom seek, whereas it may be sought.
And might we, in recompense of just Heavens best gift ;
Unto us men, Speech and Understanding Mind,
As diver, groping neath gross waters' weight
On seas dark ground, the while with-holding breath ;
Bring, were it but an emmets burden up,
Of very Sooth, to day and living light !
That phantom Porter pronounced ghostly, PASS !
Deaths iron-strong cragged Gate, our feet have passed.
We tread in, on grave-dust. Great silent weight
Is fallen on us of an Eternal Night !

The footfall made, of our entrancéd flesh,
None echoing sound ; as passed beyond Worlds Voice.
Save for our torches flickering gleam ; (and that
Is only fathoms-breath around our steps ;)
Lightless lies all dead Underworld from henceforth !

Opens vast covert maze of ghostly paths,
In hollow rocks, before our fearful pace.
In these are gliding multitude of passed spirits ;
In grave-clothes wound, descending from their deaths.
Enforced our steps, for power is come upon us ;
Like unto that, which over them prevails :
We go down, in great shelve of cragged rock ;
To úndigged dim vast Gulf, abysmal place ;
Under wide West parts, of round-eddying Earth.
Whose horrid walls, in grim default of light,
Reveals our torch uneath. There drooping souls,
In langour of late deaths, lo ! in ghostly troops ;
Through hundred galleríes, which do there converge ;
Arrive each moment.

Standing them amidst,
Lo, are strong-winged Æons, pride-fallen, before Time was,

From starry shore ; which marshal them in flocks :
And winnowed from lives' dross, in balances, poise :
And ássign, after their deserts, in ranks ;
Unto their several wards, to sleep in death.

We as fearful fugitives, with faltering knees ;
Where all unknown, before our nightmare steps ;
(So dread, so dark !) have hasted thence to pass.
In crooked ways we tread, uncertain paths.
Have showed our torches fitful gleam at length ;
Like some unending dove-cote, in derne cliff :
Or to compare together small and great ;
Like to the formal treasure-house of the bee :
Where innocents sleep, buds of great Tree of Life ;
Whom Winters spite had withered from the root.
Ere might they, tó a kíndly Sun unfold,
Their first frail leaves. Their place of rest beneath,
Cradle to cradle, and deep under deep ;
In Underworld was this.
Us seemed traverse.
From thence long night beneath of many paths.
Bay, then, abode of lunatic spirits, we passed :
Some of whom waked. I viewed, with hearts dismay,
Their sad fond troubled looks !
To lower deeps,

Decline our steps : whose vaulted gloom uneath,
Our torches ray might pierce. Was then, we ceased
To be urged forth. Stayed thus, in womb of
Earth ;
Not yet being manifest HERTHAS promised voice ;
We feared, as shut in íron unending tomb.
Till I bethought me of the Muses staff.
It then in darkness dread I poised upright :
And as it fell forth, we our face addressed.
Within a while, continued thus our course ;
Our torch shows new inextricable paths :
Dire yammer sounded in our ears, before
Our halting steps : mistrust was in our hearts.
We would and had we might, have swerved from
thence.
The image presently mirrored in our glass :
(We had hastily taken our Merlins mirror forth ;)
Showed fearful gleam of Sinners' Wailing-place.
Whose spirits rest nót, after their fleshes' deaths ;
But wallow and wind, in torment of their minds ;
Shut out from bliss.
Self-love, their only God,
Hath them undone. Though severs them from us,
Wall-like vast mountain-mass of iron rock.
Appeared there souls of wights, in Merlins glass ;
Horrific spectacle, midst fire-flashing smoke,
In endless pine, where thousand flaming mouths

Doom-pits, showed in wide Plain. In every abyss,
Writhed demon-gotten monsters of mankind.
That vainly amidst their torments, upward climb :
To fall, to greater bale, back from the brinks.
Other hell-footed throngs came in view soon,
O'er dire champaign : and mongst those last deceased,
One crowned, cast lately down unto this place
An execration, an astonishment !
Seeing, who flagitious most, mongst all those lost ;
Stood midst their torments still, and turned their backs ;
On him, the World's derision, from henceforth.
Now a loathly leprosy blots his werewolfs face.
Then suddenly on him, strong fiends with flaming locks ;
Fiends risen from burning powder of Hell-plain ;
Have seized : and that Warmonger they hale forth.
And to adamant stake him bind, and on his neck,
Nithing ! lay load of hell-forged bitter chains :
Forged namely of manslayers' blood dripping blades.
Is that before like forged, steel-looking glass :
Wherein he evermore contemplates himself ;
(Whiles of his recreant heathen heart he eats ;)
His coxcomb visage and enormous deeds :
Till Time shall cease. And aye accusing voice
Rings and reverberates, in his beings ears ;
Requiring of his impious soul, the breath ;

Of Europes Human Spring !
In that we gazed,
Trembling exceedingly, in Merlins glass ;
With bereaved thought, dire Earthquake Hell-craigs smote.
To open seemed and shut all ways about us :
Stagger, and whelm, and shatter overhead
Hell-frame ; and floor to crumble underfoot.
We might not dwell ; nor knew we a refuge-place.
Then was, came HERTHAS foster-spirit upon us ;
Which seemeth us strongly ; each leading by the hand,
(Hand closed in hand ;) lift from that peril forth.
And we, ascending thus, from lower deeps ;
Whither were we miswent, of Earth beneath :
Have passed before that benign Well-of-Grace ;
Which from high heavens long-suffering Mercy-seat,
Flows even down to the Lost. Some of whose drops
Fell likewise luminous sprinkling upon us ;
Like to an healing dew, where our steps passed.
Seemed from that point, wax lighter every moment,
The gross compacture of this corruptible flesh :
As might I run on air of Upper Earth ;
Hills overleap, speed o'er a waters face.

Leagues-way seemed lift me each alternate tread ;
Nor more my footfall echoing rumour made.
Great Herthas Voice it is, upholds our steps,
In Underworld, and guides our forward course.

We speed in dim main thoroughfare of Worlds Dead,
And namely of righteous souls ; whose flesh was laid,
With tears of late, to moulder in sad grave.
They are many which borne forth ; they ghostly glide ;
Like drift of orchard blossoms, falling rife ;
Wafted of South winds breath ; towards their place
Appointed them, of Everlasting Rest.
Yet dernly aught, in great Underworld, we perceive
Till to that circuit of Hells RADIOUS ROCKS,
Where sleep Worlds Faithful Dead, our steps arrive.
And that is now ! . . . Pause hath our giddy race :
And waning in the same, whiles we approach ;
Is saving light, of Herthas star-bright torch.
Ló, a numbed multitude, gathered to Souls' Porch ;
Which wedded were in World, to righteous life !
Where cease our soles to tread, a little aloof ;

We a sóul viewed, that conflicted with himself:
Which finally he, subdued; trode underfoot:
Whom then the rest received to fellowship.
Threefold stands, in dim light, that solemn Port.
Not of one building only, or substance like,
The several gates; but all like-radious.

PATHS OF THE JUST I read engraven on height.
Conformable to souls-stature, of just spirits:
Those give on several Regions, quoth the Voice;
Where their eternal heritage is, of Peace.
With that was in mine hand, the Muses staff;
As Mansoul bade, I knockt on a side-port:
Nor feared; so from withinforth wafted breath
Was of hearts' rest, which all constraint dispersed.
PEACE, the thrice-blessed high warden of that place:
(A Chief One He, amongst the Sons of God;
Being multipresent, in the Universe:)
Lookt from a lattice. And taken cógnizance of us;
(White be his brows, as snow; his eyes star-bright;)
Lifted the hasp: and, *Pass with God*, PEACE quoth.
Neath covert of His dove-like wings, outstretcht,
We assurance entering found, in House of Death:

Nay, an occult parfume seeemd surprise our sense,
Of heavenly places!

Led by Herthas Voice;
Recomforted now, in Radious Rocks, we course.
For all ways shine there dimly luminous;
As some wood-bank is seen, in World above,
Which gledeworms haunt. A kosmic light it is
Remained, of heavens effulgent radiance;
When Earth was in Her making, midst the stars:
Which evermore théy shed forth, by slow degrees.
And partly a spiritual light it is.
A new and happy pang empierced our hearts:
Where suffered us the Voice suspend our steps,
At first before a lodge in luminous cliff,
Embayed; where slumbering heroes sleep uplayed:
Britannias sons renowned, (nor lightly named,
Seed of the Gods; for their prowd warlike deeds:)
Which wrought deliverance, both o'er Land and Seas.
Here then sleep those magnanimous, whose names' praise
Lives on mens lips, and in our grateful hearts;
War-smiths in their war-weed. Be uphanged bays,
O'er each ones generous head. Wounds they received:
Shine with a sacred light and camphire breathe.

On them we gazed, with lingering long regard :
Through misty trembling, on our eyelids, tears.
Have they, and like defenders of our hearths ;
Which beat down the Unright, Gods endless Peace !
Sleep other, from them hardly a shafts-flight forth :
Nor less, (though strove not those in field,) of worth.
Were they pre-eminent in all citizens' works ;
Upholding the honour of their Nations House.
Further, rest certain meek ones of the Earth,
Yet militant and great in heavenly sight ;
Under lo crowns they sleep, of living light.
Unmoveable, forcible, upright unto Death ;
They little esteeming Worlds brief fleshling life ;
Like to lone light-towers, founded on fast rocks ;
Witnessed midst storms of malice, for the RIGHT !
And though might we not tarry, in Underworlds paths :
Yet mongst souls' blessed Dead of the White Isle ;
(Where we more softly slow and reverent tread) :
Vouchsafed the foster-Voice, whom I besought ;
I linger might, before clear shining rock ;
At my petition become visible :
Wherein appeared a little cubicle.
White was it as mine Islands cliffs ; whereo'er
A gentle dove stood graven, with wings displayed.

(There I alone, a private grief might open.)
With childhood eyes, I looked upon a tomb :
I an alabaster casket gaze upon.
PEACE I read, (her lives name,) shine graven thereon ;
Who numbered with the blesséd, here sleeps and waits ;
That Dawn celestiál, which sháll not fade :
(The eyes of love, even marble-stone may pierce !)

Like to a lily in a thorny wood ;
How beautiful wast thou, ín thy few life-days,
In forest of the World ; so few alas.
Death cannot dim thy vision, in my heart.
Dear Lodestar bright ; whereby I daily set,
My shallops course, in Lifes sollicitous voyage.
Long cold be those dead lips ; that word ne'er spake
Unworth, unsooth ; those dying lips, that kissed,
Once kisst, (thy natures painful travail past ;)
This last new-born on thy dear breast, alas.
For death, that may not be entreated, set
Had early, on thy dear front, His seal, alas !
Mother of my lifes breath, I living lift
O'er thee, these prayer-knit hands. I durst not weep ;
Lest I of Under-Earth, the canon break.
I heard a Voice saying, *Spirits which in their rests*,

Behold the Heavenly Vision, cannot wake,
To Wordly speech. Revealed, all in that moment,
Was to mine inward vision HERTHAS VOICE;
Mighty, not human-membered, PROTEAN SPIRIT.

Through wards and galleries of the Radious Rocks,
Us HERTHAS VOICE compells, with quickened steps.
As startled hare in field scuds from her form:
So our alternate feet, speed under us.
When first the VOICE restrained again our course:
Twin antique river-floods, in a wide Plain,
Great *Digla and Frat, (amongst the sons of men,
Of old resounding fame,) we mirrored view:
That flow from mountain-fastness of the Gods:
Which upholds heavens wide firmament, on that half.
And water Lands, where settlements founded first;
Were of men, gathered in communities;
Amongst whose citizens, were those seers-Chaldeans,
Which erst divined stars' occult influences.
Had the ANCIENT-OF-DAYS, midst that fair champaign;
Whence doth the sacred-morning radiance spring;
Planted a garden; where, of the floods' loam:

*Tigris and Euphrates.

He tempered in His hands, His fingers formed
First fathers of the World ; and breath of life,
In their clay breasts, He breathed : and charge them gave,
To keep it, as His divine pleasure was.
Trembled the Earth, in that She Man brought fórth.
And came, divided from brute clay, on Man
The dívine breath ; whence Speech and Mind, Whereby
Today to Heritage of all the Earth ;
Those Adamites have attained.
Tilth found Mans kind ;
In morning of the World, through handiwork :
Where each soul hath received his acre-breath,
Of the LORDS Field, They, an husband-folk, it pierce
With mattocks ; they it water and subdue.
And eat of the increase and have enough.
Their plots made plain, they seed-pans of mould fined,
Prepare ; and furrows for young sets, wherein
They in-let waters from the river streams,
Bearing in slime. And sith the dulcet-palm,
They plant their water-sluices, all along.
The crooked plough-share find mens later sons ;
And tame under the yoke, stiff-necked wild beves :

By whose napes strength, they cleve the glistening glebe.
As for their grain, when harvest-moon is seen ;
Blithe husbands whet the sickle ; and put in
Their teeming corn-stalks billowing wide in wind.
Then joy and shouting in each bountiful field :
Where maiden companies, dight their virgin locks,
With corn-flowers, carol forth from plot to plot ;
Treading with timbrels roundels, as they wend.
Some, bever bear, in sweating water-skins
Unto their thirsting reapers.
Further forth,
The smiles I see, where dance those to an house ;
That blossom, full of laughter, on their lips,
Like dewy roses ; where on foster Earth,
Mild-eyed grave ancients, sunning pensive sit.
The gentle choirs, returning have I seen,
In Merlins glass. They zealous-handed now ;
Bind grips of corn-ears, roaming to and fro ;
The treasure that reap men : their burdens then,
Bear in their bosoms, to the threshing-floors,
At the steads' lathes ; where tread slow-footed round,
The toilful ox-teams.
Vine-rows men have learned
And orchards, in succeeding age, to plant.
When Time of Summer fruits is comen in ;

Now vintage month : they pluck, God giving thanks,
Thereof. And there is mirth where blithe young men ;
Tread, stived in fats, sweet clusters of ripe grapes
Hark to the merry pipes ! And when those cease
Men shout, and mongst them loud hand-clapping is.
And when run in the urns is all the must ;
Glad heydeguyes begin of lads and maids,
In Spring-tide of their lives. And who look on,
Jests bandy back again. And mumming seen
Is at their bonfires, neath vast night of stars.

At erst, that antique people of Shinars Plain ;
Had framed them cabans, of the river-reeds.
Sith they of well-trode clay, have walled them bowers.
And being to multitude grown, God's human kin :
Is mongst them traffic ; in well-peopled plain :
Where (which were pinfolds,) hundred villages rise :
And wrights are in their streets ; and chapmen trade :
That bear on camels' backs forth diverse wares.
And later ; is Mother-city, Babylon named,
Of all that march, cómpassed with walls and towers.

But ah, vicissitudes of this World of ours!
How, in bríef precession of etérnal stars;
The glory of all that builded clay of theirs,
Returnéd is to dust, as dream that fades:
Where sith wild asses crop the desert herb;
And the Arabians stretch their hair-cloth tents.
Nor more is that first Family of the World named,
Men of divine descent; have long forgot
Mens lips it to pronounce!

Were stayed our steps;
Suspent, before great antique sepulchre.
We viewed within, One on his elbow leaned;
(Accustomed guise of men, in those East parts;)
Whose front girds royal gem-dight diadem:
NEBO, who instituted righteous laws,
Rock of his people, prophet, priest and king.
Souls! quoth that venerable sire evoked;
Which have not your mortality yet put off:
How came ye in hither! And entered by what Gate?
To ghostly realms, of everlasting sleep.
I read, revert! lest suddenly overtake,
You a púnishment, thát Heavens ordinance transgress;
Descended to Worlds Grave, before your deaths.
Made reverence, Mansoul hath responded thus.

We entered hither by the gates of PEACE.
Know, O righteous King of men, mongst living wights,
Whom comforts yet the Sun, in World above ;
We have diligently sought out righteous paths.
Nor, without Heavens grace we be descended ;
In an excess of spirit, yet living flesh,
Beneath the Earth, to enquire of Ages past.
Unto whom, as nearer to immortal Gods ;
Was more revealed, than vouchsafed is to us :
Concerning Wisdom and eternal Light.
NEBO. Heaven fúlfill right desires of pious hearts !
But what might, where there naught remaineth to ús ;
Save this Vast Shadow and dust of Silent Death ;
My children, I, long dead, to you impart ?
And lifting his two consecrated hands ;
Which wont his Nations prayers and sacrifices ;
(He a Prophet, herald of eternal Gods ;)
To offer up : he sware his royal oath,
By THRONE of the MOST HIGHEST ; him liever were,
To be a thrall, one captive led in war ;
A tiller of Earths dust, or to keep flocks ;
Or shipman trading by the rivers flood :
And see rise dewy dayspring on Earths face ,
And smell that sweetness of a morrows breath ;

Than crowned and sceptered King, here swoon
in death.
MANSOUL. Warden of men, beseech thee! únfold
to us;
That Wisdom heavenly, whích once Saviour Gods,
Time was, infuséd in thy living breast.
NEBO. Is not HIS Eye all-seeing overall?
Contend to please Him: so do to all men;
As thou wouldst be done by of them. Deceased;
So mayest thou enter This eternal rest.

Whiles yet great Nebo spake; so swiftly under us,
Removed our flitting feet, uneath I might
Draw vital breath: us seemed wide realms we pass.
When little and little ralented was our course.
We a mighty Land beheld, in Merlins glass:
Of mountain-chines, plains tawny, desolate;
Wherein clay villages, and mens tillage scant;
Few cities walled, of aspect ruinous.
We, journeying thus be come, in Worlds beneath:
Where lo, the appearance in a radious grot;
Of One of ancient days, of lofty looks:
Whom ZARATHRUSTRA* names the foster Voice.

He chants before an everburning hearth;
Whereon are leaping, the undying tongues

*Zoroaster.

Of hallowed flames : flames figuring in his thought,
The invisible Image of the MOST HIGH GOD
Of the Whole Earth, The GOD of Light, he hymns.
Opened Mansoul, before the Mage, his mouth :
And boldly, All-hail, O Light of Elam ! spake.
We adjure thee, O Teacher, open thou to us,
Seekers of very Sooth and Living Light :
What is that heavenly knowledge, which enshrined
Of old was in thy breast
In that he spake ;
We laid fast hold on thé infernal rock ;
Lest were we suddenly, at unwares, ravisht forth
Whilst we with him conversed. And Mansoul saith,
WHO launcht the stars on their eternal Course ?
Who established the infinite ordinance of the Earth ?
Deemest thou ALL-SEEING celestial MIND, regardeth,
The GREAT ALL-WEILDER, óf the Universe :
Continually, all that medley of infinite haps,
That cometh each moment, on World's ground to pass ?
Where men find hitherto few well-ássured paths !
From thousand years' raptures raised, the Seer regardeth us :
And whiles he seemeth yet bete the sacred flame ;
He answered tardily ; Unweaned from fleshly life :
What seek ye, ere days prefixt of your own deaths ?

In this, Worlds infinite Deep, of ages past ;
Realm only of spirits.
MANSOUL. If an angels voice,
Hath spoken in thine ear ; teach us, we adjure
Thee, by this holy hearth !
ZARATHRUSTRA. Hear ! Souls, not yet
Purged from blind-born affections of Man's flesh.
Of nothing nothing can derive. The Light
And Dark be set before your living steps.
MANSOUL. Can BEING, we ask, be PARENT of ITSELF ?
From whence ALL floweth ?
ZARATHRUSTRA. The ALL, the WAS, the IS,
Founded in Bosom of Eternity, both
The Visible and Invisible ; when was yet
No place. And, in that spake the HOLY BREATH ;
The Elements were found : (pollute them not !)
And spread His hands the heavens, and hanged them forth ;
On hinges, that they evermore might revolve.
Be clothed each soul with light ! Seek to ALL-LIGHT :
Walk in the ways of Truth, eschew dark paths.
Thy garden bé, O Child of Light, good thoughts.
Thy deeds, which seeth ALL-SEEING EYE, good works :
So shalt thou inherit, in the Paradise.

MANSOUL. Can none unfold Dark Riddle of the World;
Which so long time confounds weak human sense?
ZARATHRUSTRA. Death cannot sound that SECRET of the Gods.
MANSOUL. What shall we do? since more we may not know.
ZARATHRUSTRA. Seek oneness of your souls, with the HIGHEST GOOD,
Which all things sways; LORD of all MIGHT, LIGHT, LOVE.
Observe ye in nothing do contaminate
Earths sacred FACE, the Sun-Gods daily Hearth.
So may ye inherit with the spirits of Light:
And tread the Power of Darkness underfoot.
He said, and slept.

BOOK III

THE RADIOUS ROCKS

BOOK III

Still urged on our swift course;
Through inextricable Underworlds hundred paths:
Toucht hardly to hollow floor of Radious Rocks,
Our light removing feet. Our hearts misgave us;
Lest were we all-suddenly dasht, on some derne cliff.
When first we might refrain our flitting steps;
We shadowed view, in living World above;
Whiles darkly we behold, in Merlins glass;
Great mountain mass, shrouded with snowy fleece.
That vast sky-shouldering battlement passed beneath,
Immane tyned ranks, and Winter-World above;
We forests view beyond, and mighty Land;
Hills, plains and river-floods neath Sun, that shines
O'er cities rife, of many-peopled Hind.
In certain plot, whereon did light our glance,
We looked; and sheltering saw from noontide heat,
The ENLIGHTENED ONE, of cheerful countenance;
As soul which blessing hath of inward feast.

Tranquil, mild-eyed, as who sequestered lead,
Their few days life, in pious abstinence.
Thus sojourning in his path, the Teacher sate;
Under wide bo-trees bowering hermitage:
Pavilion, which renewed her leafy locks;
Sith that thrice-blessed seceded from the Earth;
Hath thóusand times, vénerable tradition sayeth.

Assembled thither, many to him are:
Young men the most, whose souls an-hungered seek;
Of the saints lips, their spiritual meat.
With whom be found some few of riper years:
Which renounced Worlds desires, their former selves
Forsake, for their souls' health; and elders, that
All else forget, to live of world's lean almes
Following the Master's steps, whereso he goeth;
Preaching in field, in street, Mans perfect life;
From place to place.
The same wide-spread green boughs,
A little company of wife-folk shrouds apart:
Which disenamoured of Worlds cares, embrace;
A life, from every fleshly taint released:
Widows be they most part. Following far off;
They daily Instruction seek of the Saints speech.
Is one of them that gentle bride, time was;

Whom he, in days of his ingenuous youth,
Espoused, with bliss of heart, as custom was.
And dured that joy, betwixt them both, till day ;
Whenas him thought, him called, celestial Voice ;
And beckoned him divine ray from the Sky.
Whereto not disobedient, his rapt spirit,
Contending long in anguish with himself :
Fleeing the joy tumultous and loud Voice.
Of pipes and timpans, in his fathers court :
He, her new delivered, the same night forsook.
Dim were his eyes, whiles he gazed on them both ;
Mother and babe, in her sweet bosom, sleeping.
Lifting then the door-curtain to part forth ;
He loving, sighed. He, a man ; ah ! would have taken,
Their new-born, in his fathers arms. Nathless ;
Though wrought his heart with force, not looking back ;
He issued to cold clear night-stars, those eyes
Of Gods ; (confused, he wist not what he would !)
To wander, as one outcast, in wilful want ;
Forgetful of his good and father's house :
Thirsting, in agony of his inward spirit ;
If haply he might not hear, in field or forest ;
Once more that heavenly Voice, to his souls rest ;
And see that ray, in Worlds default of Light.

Hath many a dying year brought forth her like.
To-day is he the TEACHER, the soul-blessed.
And she, the cherished of his blameless youth:
Grey-headed now, a lowly meek recluse;
(Seceded from the World, to him unwist;)
Follows mongst them, that seek souls Highest Good.
All gather to the Buddha*, with mild looks;
Preaching, beside Hinds paths, the blameless life.
Bare be they, even as he, thé-Illumined, is;
Of all Worlds good: they exchánge thereof have made,
For fragrant poverty, and abstinence that he taught;
For freedom, from contagion of birth-flesh.
Benign of aspect is that pious Light,
Of hundred generations of the East;
Whom age and penury hath long-time now consumed,
But not subdued.
Naught hath he to his mouth:
Save daily pittance of lean rice, that cast
Unwilling wordly hands, in his almes dish:
And rusty weed, which laps his clayling corse;
Hewed even as we do see Earths foster-dust,
Be eath our feet; stitcht only of dísused clouts.
And in his hand, that which his feeble pace

*i.e., The Enlightened One.

Upholds, a staff.
Constrains so a pity the heart,
Of Hinds blind folk, which beats in Buddhas breast :
That eachwhere, albeit he cometh all-weary, he teacheth
All who will hear, with words of light and peace :
How may, through steadfast vertue, a man raze out ;
Souls stains, ingenerate in his mortal breast.
We stood anon, to listen to his sooth ;
And radiant beams, as of a well-of-light ;
Saw issue, from the Buddhas sinless breast :
And shone his serene countenance, whiles he spake :
When finally, O beloved, shall be quenched,
All malice, within your faithful hearts, rejoice.
Feeling the saint, the hour of his decease
Approach, he spake again ; *Faint not your hearts,*
Which weaned were from the World. This saying, soul-glad,
But languishing now his venerable flesh,
He paused. Lo, and droopeth upon that sacred breast,
The Buddhas head, and sinks his feeble corse !
His spirit from that frail tenement of Worlds life,
Is parted forth.
Fowls plained, mongst the green boughs,

Shrill chiding in their several kinds. Field beasts
Deep-lowing mourned, with sons of men, that wept :
Winds wailed aloft ; trees shed their crowns of leaves :
Cast glooming clouds wide darkeness, on Earth.

MOTHER of soul-religions ASIA, whence
Glad day, when night is passéd, reverts to us :
T'is Thy large FOSTER-BOSOM, lends to us
All spiritual light, in Worlds West parts.
Diviners, ín whom dwelleth an heavenly Breath,
Above the Wisdom of the World ; (whereas,
Their lives'-long, wont mens feet in mire stick fast :)
Thy Seers, spake of a Time-to-Come, unborn
And witness bare of Heavens hid purposes ;
Albe they prophecíed oft to the Winds ears.
Words of their mouths, were like to falling rain-
Drops, full of golden light, on a waste sand ;
Which issue again as well-springs, hemmed around,
With healing herbs ; whereof whoso doth taste,
Shall be refreshed.
And therethrough many hearts,
In many diverse lands, be offered up
Unto heavenly THRONE, and the GREAT POWER thereon :
Like those wild tears of sacred terebinths ;

Which gather men adventurous, in occult
Worlds far-off solitudes, and stark mountain steeps,
Beyond all paths ; where Sun unhymned mounts
forth :
Which fume sith, on all altars of round Earth.

But in our Vision, hurried ever forth ;
Being hidden from our sight the shipmans star :
We wiss not, under what Worlds coasts we are.
When might we first contain our shifting feet :
We inhuman Plain perceive, in Merlins glass ;
Of cold and darkness, daughters of the Night.
Land trodden down of hoofs, cart-villages ;
Of Tatar hordes, milk-nourished of their mares.
Which passed, upleaning in a calm divine ;
We enranged unknówn wide mountains under-
ran.
They, our glass shows, confine on and compass
in,
Vast green land-breadths. And lo ! much-peopled
Region ;
Which SERES our sires named, of aspect strange :
Full of fields' tilth, rife villages and great towns.
Much toilful husband-folk, regarding wide,
Bent under burdens, like to beasts of charge ;
Men clothed in silk ; we behold in large glebe.
And presently him, whom mirrored we have sought ;

By great good hap, we eyed, in a field path ;
KUNG* the wise-hearted, loitering not far off :
As was his custom, on a country-side ;
Mongst the Lands commons, ancient of mild mood.
With few in company, his scholars, Kung fares thus ;
With comely gravity, from State to State :
Seeking some Prince, who should reform the Time ;
Conformably with what precepts he sets forth ;
Of virtue, ingenerate in all human breasts.
Who him súe, wait on Kungs sayings, observe his looks ;
Whose gaze demiss, aye fastened is on ground.
And oft as Kung wends pensive, he recites,
Some old Worlds lays and saws of former sages.
And like as child seeks to his fosters arms,
In each new hap : so they, as aught befalls ;
Of Kung seek an instruction for their lives,
In reverent wise.
Nor seld that Wise-sayer toucheth,
The tuneful lute, he alway bare in hand.
When, on those dreaming strings, Kung softly plays :
Them seemeth they hear, celestial harmonies.
Whereúnto should a man attune his being.

*Confucius.

Kung, in his progress, stays ; on us he gazed :
And strangers, quoth, of other Land than ours ;
What seek ye ? And how, not yet disbodied spirits ;
Found ye éntry unto our Mid-Kingdom here ?
MANSOUL. We long-time, sought in living World, Truth-Sayer,
Heavens oracles. And entrance having found,
To ages of the Earth, laid up beneath :
Wisdom and saving Knowledge, in right paths ;
We of thém likewise enquire.
KUNG. I enter not,
In things too hígh for me. Mán was born upright.
Obey heavens hests, which written are on all hearts.
Whoso hath purged his own and burnished bright,
May read them there. In what so Land thou comest ;
Observe their customs and that Peoples laws ;
Which shadows be of the heavenly, on Worlds ground ;
And testimony of the Gods.
Watch furthermore.
To bridle all blind affections of gross flesh ;
Not kill, for then the human World must cease,
Two selves war in Mans being : the high Intent ;
That walketh in Truth ; this sue, souls comliness :
And that suppress, the Beast beneath the breast.
Harbour ne'er in thy spirit a baneful thought.

Measure, benevolence, grace and harmony:
These be the fruits, the wares, the ornaments;
Where Reason rules of every righteous breast.
Kung said; and weary in going, his trembling rote,
Tempered: and tó his waked strings, áccords, quoth;
(Words partly heard, as we drew further forth:)
Crumble the hills, each balk at length must break:
And who seek after Wisdom, as a plant;
Shall likewise perish.

We, whom HERTHAS Voice,
Hath hithertó unnumbered leagues conveyed;
Nigh spent our spirits, now wayfare long last stage.
Ends then, in vast blind Cirque our outward course:
Wherein those devious paths, we lately trode;
Returning on themselves, in spires, ascend.

Great ASIAS shores, Earths triple-Continent,
We view in Merlins glass; and from the plot
Where stand our feet, how stoops an only path;
Gallery, óf great breath and height, neath Oceans Flood.
That hundred leagues'-way leads, quoth Herthas Voice,

Towards ISLAND KINGDOM, Pride of Earths Still-Seas ;
Over against this, Asias Main-Lands, lies :
Green gracious Isles ; whereas from ancient days,
(Long unknown tó West Nations,) a great-souled
Sequestered, urbane, valorous People dwell :
In Arts of Peace and War, of passing skill.
But to us it was not given, so far to pass :
Nor to that laterfound NEW CONTINENT ;
So great already in multitude of mankind ;
In enterprises and all civil arts :
And to be greater still, in Worlds to come.
So an aching langour hath possessed each sense.
Wherefore now HERTHAS Voice imposed ; must this
Bé Eastfórth, our wáy-bruised feets' last halting-place.
From whence, by other paths of Worlds beneath ;
We should return upon our homeward voyage.
I leaned, long lacking sleep, to a luminous cliff ;
With throbbing heart, and trembling every limb :
All thought suspended, happy seemed their case ;
That sleep, that rest, just spirits, in Underworlds rocks :
Their lives' pains ceased, their fleshly sojourn past.
Till called me to rememberance HERTHAS Voice :
Bidding me rouse, be óf good cheer ; and taste,
To souls refreshing, of the Muses cup ;
Wherein should spring ambrosia, of itself.

This bare I in a wallet, with Merlins glass.
With aspiration then, to Stars of heaven ;
I took it forth. When of that sprinkling sap ;
Ghostly not earthly, as blood is of the grape,
I had tasted : I perceived new vital warmth,
To come again, and diffuse through my being :
And faded from my limbs, their stony frost.
Sith with that chrism, anointed my bruised soles :
They too were healed, of long-way weariness.
So that when bade the Voice us to remove,
I ready also was.

With troubled hearts :
In óuter Circuit of those Radious Rocks,
Which there less luminous, néw ways now we pass.
And saw strewed shining adamants under-foot.
Tears those be of souls, that wept for righteousness,
In ages past, which light lent to our steps.
Yet further forth, (is Westing now our course ;)
We reached dim luminous Mansion, of just spirits :
Cliffs vast Recess. Where entering-in our steps,
We paused ; for sounded, Daughter of the rock,
Strange manifold Echo, from before our pace.
Nor is that grot unlike, those látomies ;
We sometimes find, in Summer-Lands remained :
Whence the ancients hewed and drew giant Temple-stones ;

MANSOUL

To Eternity vowed, which even our days admire.
Moreo'er seemed vocal, craggéd walls and floor;
When haply thereto toucht the Muses' staff.
Then Mansoul spake, Was not it, divine Voice,
Upholder of our steps; herein the FATES
Hanged tables of Destiny? Ah, and might Thou, aiding us!
We find and read the Legend therein writ!
What should those prófit Mans disbódied spirits?

THE VOICE

Mans destiny is veiled, with an eternal cloud.
The FATES' decrees, not visible are to sight.
That occult knowledge to themselves reserve,
Aye-living Gods.
Mansoul fell in discourse;
With certain spirits, whom men deemed Friends-of-God:
Shepherds of souls, unto whóm committed was,
Of Heaven, to feed and fold the human flocks.
Likewise with some philosophers he discoursed,
Of hidden causes; ánd with poets old;
Which, in their days, with child went of great thoughts:
Men of prowd parts; whom the Ionic rocks

Brought forth, to solace of mens travaillous breasts.
But of their utterance, as nights dream that fades ;
I only few words may here call to mind.
MANSOUL. And is there any, amongst the sons of men ;
To whose téstimony, all humanity might trust ?
Were not they as we be, Gropers in thick murk ;
Who esteemed were wise and heralds of high Gods :
Nor can they reconciled be amongst themselves.
VOICES. Is not the World all guile ? Born in Worlds wood,
Where life preys upon life ; mens homicide hearts
Dissemble sooth, to maintain their own parts.
Some dreameth, his yesternights begotten wit ;
Unfolding tardily, ás Spring leaves' bud doth :
Third part of whose life-days, night-dotage is,
Of dreams ; and childhoods weakness hardly less :
Sufficeth to sound illimitable Universe !
OTHER VOICES. The lips of many have spoken words of Life.
In this, at least, the best agree in one :
That in well-doing and righteous human life ;
Sure pathway lies unto immortal Gods.
In all the haps and changes of the Time
And of their World, which those have sought to purge :
Mans Reason is his lamp and only guide.

Not uniform is that Reason of a man ;
But warped, with every variance of the World ;
His time, place, partiality and his brief years.
We sought, advance to that recesses end ;
And shining monuments of forgotten dead :
If might we read some name ; on whose grave-stone ;
Sing little birds loves hymns, in living World ;
And Summer-blossoms strews some kindly wind,
Breathed gently from above ; their green earth-mounds.
But us forbade to tarry HERTHAS Voice,
Which companied with us. Reverent only might
We salute them from far ; sighing, *Rest in Peace !*

Hundred and hundred léagues' way, after this,
We glide, we speed ; much like those hobbling leaves,
Which blustering March hurls forth : seemed our flit feet,
More rathe than swallows' flight. In headlong race ;
Seemed memory daze, and swoon our feeble sense.
Whiles still, as steel to loadstone drawn, we haste.
Rise up, to meet our breasts, and neath us pass ;
One after other, seemed Hells hundred paths.

Naught know we, save that Westforth lies our
course.
Last stayed ; we a wilderness view in Merlins glass.
Bare, sun-bleached, stony, all empty of herbs' life :
One of the great waste places, of Earths face.
Where is the rain restrained, and falleth by night
No dew : which few wild creatures nourisheth ;
Save the unicorn,* the wild roe and mountain goat,
Which drink not : (marvel is it how those subsist !)
Aye, and where the scudding Ostrich hath her
flight :
For whom the patient hunter lieth in wait ;
Who spyeth her paths, and watcheth, where shé
turneth,
Gainst eve, unmindful all day of her birds ;
To find her nest ; that with unerring shaft,
He her may pierce. Spoil of her royal plumes,
Shall recompense all his pains ; for be those not
Wares of great price, for lordlings of the Earth :
Whence might an handful his necessitous tent
Win, of world's silver, in what day, he them tradeth
To the town merchant ; and years raiment buyeth
Him, in the villages.

What see we ? A march
Lo, of swart tented children of the East ;

* *Thus in our translation : it is by all likelihood the N. Arabian antelope.*

That wander, each in their circuit, in this waste.
Herdsmen of cattle ; few camels and lean sheep :
That of Mans hand drink, at delved water-pits,
Digged of old time : else sink them their young men ;
With their staves only, and palms of their hands twain ;
(Having none other instruments.) Neither is
That wilderness-water alway good ; oft is
It bitter, and more often fouled it is ;
With drifted dung of cattle and desert leaves.

An austere soil is that, wherein those dwell,
Unsown ; whereas the locust is brought forth :
Whose bald, sun-bleached, gaunt untrod mountain rocks ;
Stand, like some bone-work of a former Earth.
High plain mostwhere is it of stony grit ;
Where we, in Merlins glass, see swart booths pitcht ;
Of herd-folk, men accounted robber kin :
Which wont each other morrow, to remove ;
For their beasts' feed. Booths without fence of doors
Or walls ; but that stand open to receive ;
To surety and peace and human fellowship ;
(As they too ben Gods guests,) Gods fugitive :
Yea, and aught forwanderd wayfarer, in théir wild paths ;

Heaven sends, to their poor hearths, to try their
hearts.
Wherefore, shall not they alway be forgot;
Of the EVERLASTING FATHER of all spirits!
Whose equal EYE is, over all the Earth.
We, ín that desert-side, mirrored in our glass;
Such wights behold now, to new camp arrive.
Men to their camels *hiss!* then the great beasts
Couch únder them, ánd push their great bent knees
On the grit-ground. Halted lo, each wife hath
In what stead to her now her husband showed:
Where wills he, that were builded this days booth;
Anon, each loost her packs, their tent-cloth
spreads;
With some strewed desert-stone, beats in the pegs:
Stakes undersets; and stayed with cords, uprears
Her hair-cloth house: so bears in their poor stuff.
I a watering see in gazing further forth,
From the pitched tents; of their faint bleating
flocks:
Come in, gainst midday heat, from sun-sered coast,
And the lean herb; gathered to the wells' mouths.
Whither One like Zípporah, (her name sounds Little
Bird,)
Maiden glad-eyed, leading a weanling troop;
I see approach. Upright, her stature is like
A palm-tree: as she now stayed: her turn awaits.

Buckets, of untanned leather, drawing up ;
With goats'-hair home-twined cords, with hardy foot :
Hend herd-lads, at the well-brinks, toil and sweat.
Maidens, come forth with water-skins from the tents ;
Chant, hark ! in land of thirst, with a glad Voice :
Cause, Father of Heaven, for the beasts' sustenance ;
The herb to spring, and bushes to bud forth :
That butter may we eat, and have enough
And drink milk ; and may in the villages,
Buy grain for bread.
Be those of gentle mould
As the wild roes : are like their raven locks,
To a troop of goats, that from the ledges look,
Down, from their mountain-refuge of steep rocks :
Their eyes be eyes of doves.
MAIDENS CHANT. *Thou well ! spring up,*
And water all our stock : diminish not.
Give drink abundantly, O Earth, of Thy large Breast.
Well-spring, thy foster-water, is our life.
WATERERS' REFRAIN. *With a heave ! so-ho ! Each lad think on his lass,*
The cattle thirst, heave anew lads, with force !
MAIDENS. We have water-skins brought, that all might be refreshed.
Oh how goodly is that full-sounding, in our ears ;

Of water poured out in these water-troughs !

A new impulsion, our forwearied feet
Hath urged, hath rapt forth. Esaus hilly region
We see anon ; now, and MIDIAN in our glass.
Lo, a Valley-of-Tombs* hewn in these sandstone cliffs.
Were those the eternal sumptuous sepulchres ;
Of old forgotten tradeful merchant-wights ;
That gold and frank-incense fetched, from far South parts :
Dwellers themselves, in villages of clay walls.
Whereof to-day there hardly a trace is found,
Those their eternal mansions, stand defaced,
In ruinous ranks, in remote solitude ;
Where passeth none ány more of hís free-will.
Their rotten carcases, long ago have poured out ;
Seekers of treasures. Wild men of the waste ;
Their cere-cloths rent, with laughter, on blown sand.
Loathe foul hyenas, which there lope by night ;
Their strewed now pithless bones,† and them defile.

Soon, neath new éxtreme region shows our glass,
Have reached our steps. What horror of bergs aloft !

*Petra.

† *All of which may now be better seen, in that site of like Nabatean hewn rock-tombs, with Aramaic inscriptions, and former clay villages; at el-Héjr in N. Arabia.*

Whose clefts, dry gravel-beds be of Winter streams.
Where sounds no living voice ; nor shaketh leaf,
Nor blade, of any green thing, there is seen.
Dire craigs o'er áll, mute sand-ground of strewed stones !
Rocks and stones polished, of sand-whirling winds :
Where midst, great mystic Horeb towers to heaven.
Which passed ; we, with our eyes, see shipcraft strange :
Sailing our glass shows, as o'er more waste sand !
When next we look, is Nilus antique flood
Lies imaged there ; which long-twinned Mizraims Sand ;
Makes fat more than is otherwhere in Earth found.
Our wondering eyes behold now, in sand-cliff,
Laid up in grave-shelves, many as martins nests ;
Mens carcases, yet whole and incorrupt.
That River-Lands old-times' embalmers' art.
Painted, all varnisht shining and encased ;
Whence even today, they exhale strange noisome breath ;
Of balsamum, cassia, cinnamon, olibane, pitch !

Cited, one wakened, in his cerements ;
And seemed unfold his iron-stiff wounden corse.
So made response, we might perceive uneath.
A priest he sometime was in Pharaohs house :

MANSOUL

Whilst Pharoahs ruled, seed of their first King-Gods.

PRIEST

What souls be ye, that of yourselves remove,
As living flesh, in ghostly Underworld:
Which neither wafted were, o'er sacred flood;
Nor laid to sleep, with pompous funerals!
How demon-guarded precincts might ye pass;
And seven strong circuits, of swart Gods of Death?
What tidings bruited were, in World above,
When ye descended? Shineth yet there the Sun,
And wayward Moon, in firmament of Heaven?
I do record me, in whát night I slept forth:
Invading impious arms had dispossessed
Kings' divine seed: and was the THRONE down-cast;
Whereon, sith thousand years, had Pharoah sate.
I also, at ONS high altar, fell down slain.

MANSOUL

In Mizraims river-lands, thy People dwell,
Secure. O'er all, the Right and Just prevail.
The harvests of their fields more plenteous are,
Than ever ere.
But as for us, descended;

Souls living, to this Under-Earths dim floor :
We Seekers are, if so were we might more
Souls understanding have, of long nightmare
Of doubt ; which hitherto holds suspent mens hearts :
How erst was Aught ; and of the Divine Power.
This of thee we require ; Pronounce to us,
Those words of Life, which entering once a year
With fasting lips, Ons adyt ; the Kings Seer
Recited ; touching Riddle of the Universe.
PRIEST. Unborn Eternity ! Souls ! in your fond quest ;
Is Time grown oft-while old upon Earths dust :
But ye be alway children, which it seek.
Shall boast itself, the water of a croc ;
Gainst mighty eternal Nilus, divine flood ;
Which fills sea-Deep, and waters wide the Earth.
Twixt Man and heavenly knowledge, know, lies Gulf,
Mind cannot overferry : nor which pass,
Can even the lesser Gods.
Who walketh in Truth,
And giveth almes ; for the only recompense,
Which cometh of Heaven : him will OSIRIS save ;
When to his Hall of Judgment, he arrives.
MANSOUL. Is such your wisdom ?
PRIEST. More than this is vain.

BOOK IV

GREAT UNDERWORLD'S VOYAGE

BOOK IV

We are speeding under seas; now shows our glass
Tumultuous wind-tosst watery wilderness,
Above; and soon we pass not far from where,
Long-ranged white cliffs of Island Crete appear;
Isle hundred-citied, ín Old World renowned:
Where Minos ruled, esteemed son of a God;
For his great wisdom both and worthy deeds.
Who his People, statutes taught and ordinances.
Wherefore to him eternally have the Gods
A judgment-seat assigned in Underworld.
Him saw we not, but ravished further forth,
Continued; till with joy of heart, we raught,
Europas shore, hem of Home Continent.
Is that neath Suniums foreland; whose proud rock
Crowns pillared témple of the blue-eyed Goddess;
Which guards the Attic coast.
Eftsoon, new hap!
There shone a strange ray, o'er our covert path:

We seemed towards gleam ascend, from some well-
mouth,
Of Overworld. Come to ourselves, from less
Abysmal place, lifting up living looks :
We béheld stand famed *statua* of Phidias ;
ATHENA, on age-renowned Acropolis-cliff !
Helm-clad, with spear advanced, protending shield :
And the *aegis*, wherein bears the warlike Goddess,
Medusa embossed, shine on Her maiden breast.
One cometh this way, from Cecrops city forth ;
Through the *ágora* and busy traffic of Greeks' street:
A man whom many observe, where he doth pass.
Who is there in Athens, knows not those quaint
looks,
Of Sophroniscos son, who goeth barefoot ;
Wise-wayward thus, his weed a blanket-cloth ?
Dwells oft-time lofty heart, in lowly cot ;
So SOCRATES doth : nor seld is, vile wight rotteth,
Entombed already, in mánsion of the great.
Poor of Worlds good, (he lightly esteemeth thereof ;)
A dívine Spirit abideth, in Socrates breast.
Who come now to late evening of his years,
By age is not subdued : but aye he seeketh,
If so be hé, through Reasons reach, might 'scape
From érror ; ánd attain to tread the path,
From now henceforth, of Everlasting Truth.
Erewhile of masons' craft ; in marble blocks,

Hewn in Pentélic cliffs, drawn tardily forth,
On creaking ox-wains, o'er that thymy plain;
Young Socrates, with his father, images wrought;
Of the álleged company, of Gréeks' Olympic Gods.
Now, leaving his old art, with chisel sharp
And mallet of grave speech; he fashioneth out
The forms of vertue, in young mens minds unripe.
Is Socrates nighing in their Potters' Street:
Approach two young men from the contrary part,
Criton and Cebes friends, his hearers both.
They anon with Socrates meet, in powdrous place
Where two ways come together; and gone apart,
Stand those now, a little company, as their wont is;
In homely-wise discourse. Is that town street,
Their street of sumptuous citizens' sepulchres;
This other is Athens' sacred-way, whereby
To-day, the Elévsis Pilgrimage shall pass.

Are presently many on-lookers gathering here.
Begin first *mystœ* already by to fare.
In bands those march: and from a fellowship,
A young man steps forth, one of upright looks.
Stranger of ELIS, hearer of the sage:
Phædon by name. Though clad in purple weed;
As longeth unto this high-days pilgrimage;
Is he of those whom Socrates most esteems;

Constant in vertue, and of life unstained.
He joineth himself to them, which talk with Socrates.
Hark! how from vanward of the sacred train;
Iacche! Iacche! Theseus citizens shout:
With whom march companies, from Greeks' several States.
To ELEVSIS-ward is set of all the face.
PHÆDON. What cry is this from midst the pilgrimage?
CEBES. Who foremost; pass now bourne-stone on the bridge,
Which over-rides Kephissos droughty brook.
PHÆDON. I a retinue see, of priests and novices;
And maidens, bearing canisters on their heads.
CEBES. Offerings those bring, of Atticas summer fruits:
These other, instruments bear of sacrifices.
CRITON. All wend up purified, having yestre'en washed
Their bodies ín Phalerian waves. All trust,
Come morrow; on Image óf that greatest Goddess,
And well and dolorous stone, shall their eyes gaze.
CEBES. And mystery of the GREAT MOTHERS burning torch,
Behold, that token of saving Light in death;
Kindled at rising star, amidst the signs;
(Which known to only few of Her chief priests:)

When suddenly of thé Arch-mystagogue shall proclaimed ;
Be to áll her worshippers, from the Temple-porch :
Who is purified, whoso is undefiled, approach ;
To enter in the Sanctuarys inner court.
CRITON. *Arcana* they behold there, but may not
In ány wise, sáve to the Initiate
Commémoráte : wherein high covenant is
Established, for each soul, with Hells swart Goddess :
Ensuring aid and favour in dark tomb.
CEBES. Unto whom the hierophants únsealed lips pronounce,
That occult holy Name : Which countersign given,
Of disembodied soul, shall mitigate
The brow severe, of swart Infernal Power :
Whereunto is shown that mystery of thé seed-corn ;
Which though it dieth, sháll revive again.
PHÆDON. What néw thing doth this mány-tongued multitude shout ?
CRITON. They who go by ATHENAS olive-trunk, it salute :
Tree that once sprang full-grown up, from the root ;
What time, contending with POSEIDON, God ;
Her gift to men, PALLAS, yond high rock ! smote.
CEBES. That the ancients hold, was on the Acropolis cliff :

Nor other thán some venerable slip ;
Is this (remained, of that same parent stock ;)
Which stands now, all cavernous old, by the way side :
Her rind behanged with glittering offerings ;
Likewise her great-grown scions, her round about.
PHÆDON. New shout, chant, rising from ten thousand throats ;
Mingled with Bacchic cries, and dancing foot !
Now who páss by, áll trip with ecstatic looks !
CEBES. They a World transfigured see, hymning the Goddess.
CRITON. Sign is, thát the first pilgrims nigh now strait ;
Wherein heroon stands of ORPHEUS ;
Who went down quick to gates of Tartarus.
That with his gilded lyres soul-ravishing sound,
Tamed beasts and birds. Even rocks and rooted trees ;
Followed, as had they ears, his wavering steps.
Where Orpheus stayed, stood those him ranged around.
And do so éven unto this day, remain.
Reported is, that even swift tumbling floods,
Their liquid foot sustained ; whose rumbling streams,
Had lulled the measured melodies óf his verse ;

Who in the vaward of this Pilgrimage, march.
Wont in that place them, twixt twin cliffs, disperse ;
Each after their devotion and intent ;
Chanting some Orphic canticle as they wend
Forth, seeking hallows mongst the sacred rocks ;
Friends, and companionships, visiting óratories ;
Which, éach fratérnity best reputeth of.
SOCRATES, (*returning himself*) ; As many Gods, so many sanctuaries !
CRITON. Following the more part ón, from shrine to shrine ;
They linger this day out. Other make haste,
To pluck them herbs, meet for the bodys health ;
So were those gathered as DEMETERS priests
Allege, with dew-drops hoary on their leaves.
CEBES. Figuring wan tears, that dívine MOTHER shed ;
Suing far Écho, of sád PERSEPHONES voice.
CRITON. All having thus duly accomplished and performed ;
And left their several shrines bedecked with flowers :
Will all this mingled multitude, at third morrow ;
With merry jest and song, and garlands crowned,
Return inítiate.
PHÆDON. Mén, wives, thrálls and strangers ;
What is it these all look for, that flow by us ?
CRITON. Holiday, brave garments, human fellowship :

'T is better than a fair. Whereto put this
Pilgrims return, with honour, to their hearths;
Their estimation, ín the market-place,
Increased.
CEBES. With bodies sanctified and gained merit;
Gainst their lives' ending and dread day of Death.
SOCRATES. Can aught the beasts conceive, of human thought?
No more can fleshling wight, of few days' life;
Reach unto, imagine, reason of aright,
The hidden counsel, óf immortal Gods.
As soon a potters amphora might contain;
All billows of yond sea-plains glistering flood.
PHÆDON. How can Mans soul, that labours sore for meat;
Conversing dáily in gúileful market-place;
Attain to righteous life?
SOCRATES. Reach heaven our spirits,
May with each breath; and with high Gods converse.
PHÆDON. Dark is thy speech!
CRITON. Speak plainly, O Socrates, to us.
CEBES. Divinest thou aught of death?
CRITON. 'T is that we ask!
Declare once openly thou, thy very thought.
SOCRATES. Flesh born of flesh, must turn again to dust.

CRITON. Shall, quencht that lively spark, the Sélf
was in us: . . .
CEBES. We révert thither, whence we issued forth?
PHÆDON. Or purged thereby, the mist of mortal
sense;
And memory of Lifes disease, in Worlds unrest . . . ?
CEBES. Exhale mongst echoes of Gods Universe?
CRITON. When daweth a day, wherein we our-
selves are not;
But as one of late Winters fallen leaves:
Remaineth there aught, we dream not of, for us?
CEBES. Can any interpret chant DEMETERS priests
Recite in their dark mood?
PHÆDON. Shall ferry, on wings of Light,
Our spirits and tower to some celestial coast?
Stands Socrates sílent!
CEBES. Fállen in sóme new trance.
CRITON. Stands on one sole.
PHÆDON. Like column, that bears up,
Some noble architrave!
CEBES. A way he hath;
An ecstasis him taketh, whensó the Voice,
Which harbours in his breast, speaks with his
spirit.
CRITON. Thus stands wise owl of great ATHENA
Herself;
When mantleth she her wing. As merrily mocks,

In that late cómedy of hís ; (who héard it not ?
When on-lookers all ín the wide theatre laughed ?)
Our Aristophanés.
PHAEDON. Ph ! foolish verse !
Each watchman of the night, whom I have asked ;
Saith, Great ATHENAS fowl, stands seldwise thus.
But Socrates no more minds our trivial talk.
CEBES. I heard him yesterday cite that Orphic
Verse ;
Soul to the body is, wherein it doth lodge :
As dream of lyre is to the chords and wood.
Should both consenting sound of one accord.
SOCRATES (*returning to himself.*) . . . And live
in Faith of Thé ETERNAL GOOD.
Who dares impeach His Justice ! No man knoweth ;
To what intent Gods made and marred the World.
Nor whether Gods made men, or Man made Gods.

Now at mine entreaty, hath suffered us the Voice,
Revert ; retrace awhile our homeward steps.
Have from our vísion Athens' city and rock,
And Socrates faded ín the Muses' glass.
As weary and faint, we hold again East-course.
Once more neath flint-grey justling waves, we
haste.
Nor long was, ere on our left hand we viewed
The Cyprian Isle above. Came plainly in view

Then Canaans coast, and Carmels fruitful brow,
And the Sidonian shore. Soon seemed us was,
Neath Sharons Plain, in Underworld we trace.
  Now and dimly is Hermon in our mirror shown.
That seems, aloof, to slumber in the sky ;
To-day white-headed, with his sacred snow.
Neath valley and hill and olive yards soon we pass ;
Green in deep places, with scant trickling brooks.
Pillars and arcs, stand mirrored in our glass,
Lo ! of Somerons* site ; then Sychars fruitful plots.
  Is Libanus sith reflected, but far off :
The sighing of whose sacred perfumed boughs ;
Attuned seems, to our souls' inquíetudes.
  Land-breadth lo, of rolling-stones and squalid rocks !
Wherein our sires had neither part nor lot :
Where deeds recorded are, to have been wrought ;
Which eversith have perplexed Mans restless thought :
And too much, ah ! divideth heart from heart.
  A soil, which, ere tent-dwelling, shepherd folk,
Come up from South waste-places of the Earth ;
Had reaved of old, from who before them dwelt ;
With violent hand, commanded of their GOD.
  Mongst whom, there certain rose, named men-of-GOD,

* *Samaria.*

Tradition saith, which with that GOD conversed.
By whom HIS SPIRIT spake to their Nations ears;
He had chosen, out óf all Peoples of the Earth.
Of whom some foretold, of a day unborn;
How long that lieth, ín dark Womb of Time:
Wherein a dívine KINGDOM should descend;
And dwell for ever on JEHOVAHS Land.

With heavy feet is it, and panting hearts;
That we hold slowly this new Eastward course:
With ruinous craig-strewn mountain-ground above;
In Underworlds' hollow paths. It is not much;
(Since little is Davids Land, in length and breadth.)
Ere that, thát Son-of-Jesses City-hill;
We see, of Jews' solemnities, in our glass:
Captived of enemies oft; rebuilt as oft.
Dream we wan dreams, in Valley of Vision?
Do not
Our eyes behold a City's platform-mount;
Lacking all comeliness, mirrored thus; whose rocks,
(Once a salt sea-waves' putrid sediments;)
Lie deep-piled as a sabbath days journey, thus;
In countless ferine ages, ere Man was:
Exalted then, in Stárs' years, aloft thus?
Wherein fast-sealed be prints of claws and teeth,
Witnessing únto Mans minds eyes, that Earths
Beginning, full as now of cruelty was.

City of the Jebusíte, which David took ;
And 'stablished there his Kingdom, in their blood.
A tribesman he, descended of the veins
Of Rahab and the Moabitess Ruth.
We see it this day, wrapped in wretchedness :
Her streets a laystall. And not much unlike,
To compare small with great, is it in sight ;
To bee-flys nest, on some rude walling fixt.
Nor mind can doubt, as every builded work
Decayeth : so this shall likewise wholly perish ;
And pass, as had it néver been : when those
Sea-born bald rocks, the same shall yet be seen,
Under the Sun, as they to-day remain.
Beneath, without the city walls, we pass ;
Before some ruinous rock-hewn sepulchres,
Of prophets and Jews' Kings. And many thoughts,
Be rising and conflicting in our hearts.
And more than all, where be upheld our steps ;
Before tomb, radious above the rest :
Hewn lowly, under sculptured eaves of rock.
Wherein three-score now generations past ;
Men laid the King of Glory, a Scripture saith,
Who died on Roman Cross. Angels Him warding,
Of Light, till thírd days break : when having put
On Immortality, Jéshúa issued forth.
Have testified this, companions of the Christ.
And further, that yet forty days was seen

Jéshua of them alive : in Jewry both,
And Galilea. Till He receivéd up
Was into Heaven : whereas, ere Worlds, He was.
Words which He taught, which those deliver to us ;
Were Words of Truth, Life, Peace, Eternal Light :
They béing such ás before Him no man spake.
His words, sown in mens hearts, souls, ever sith ;
Lift from Earths dust, to HEAVENLY FATHERHOOD.
And suddenly, ás we worshipped ín that Place :
His adórable Visíon stood, us seemed, before us ;
Like as we had conceived it, in our thought :
As He appeared transfigured in the mount.
Whom Jews had piercéd on a pagan cross :
Save that His temples wréathed a thórny fret ;
Whence sprang dívine transcendent radiance forth ;
Unto healing of all Nations of round Earth.
In that He inwardly seemed to gaze upon us :
The hearts, like wax, were molten in our breasts.
When we no longer, ón that lightning countenance,
In Vision seen, durst fasten wordly gaze ;
There wakened one nigh hand, mongst Strangers' tombs :
Stephen, an Hebrew Greek, and he not least
One, in first faithful household of Christs saints :
Who brought before Jews' Council, hath confessed :
That He, whom had they ígnorantly dóne to death ;

Was He, in whom fulfilled the Promises were
Which made unto their fathers.
Jews, heard this ;
Gnashed ón him with their teeth. At their rebukes,
Kindled the Martyrs face ; that seemed the face
Then of an Angel, whiles he cried aloud :
That he beheld GODS GLORY, ín the HIGHEST.
And standing by the THRONE, the SON of Mán,
WHOM they had crúcified.
Blásphemy ! Jews loud cried :
And stopped their formal ears. Uprose young men ;
Swelled in whose hearts hot fury. In fell disdain,
Grinning like wolves, all those on Stephen ran :
Him hurled without the Bloody Citys walls :
And with snatcht stones, there slew his mortal part.
He meekly kneeling, whilst endured his breath,
Prayed for his murderers. Hounds, tradition saith
Licked his gore-blood shed, in that sinister place.
He, first thus, óf the followers of the Christ ;
Received the Crown, of saints' immortal life.

Looking on us, he *Maran-atha** quoth ;
Peace be únto you, ánd to as many as wait,

* *Aramaic: (Jews' that times ordinary speech.) the meaning is,* The LORD He cometh.

His new appearing, with the heavenly host ;
When all shall be accomplished.
MANSOUL. We have sought,
In darkness of our souls, on living Earth,
Right paths : and, (Mercy of Heaven,) we in our flesh,
Descended to Abysm of Worlds' Death ;
(With power to évoke spirits of former ages ;)
We of thém enquire likewise the ways of peace.
STEPHEN. The MASTER ; HÉ who to the heavens ascended :
ENSIGN OF NATIONS ; hath revealed to us,
A living path ; which, though all else shall perish,
Shall never pass. HE, living great High Priest,
Of our Salvation, át the THRONE of Grace,
With groans unutterable, tó the FATHER prayeth :
That ín the end of all things, now at hand ;
Might all men be partakers of His Rest.
He healed the sick, the whiles He dwelled among us,
The lepers cleansed, the three-days' dead, He raised,
He comforted the sad. The birds of air,
The beasts of field, the lilies of the Land,
Were likewise comprehended ín his Love.
The wild roes fled not forth át His approach.
DEAR LORD, make no long tarrying ! (Stephen sighed ;)

Return soon ! when the Dead, which in Thee sleep ;
Sheep of Thy fold, shall hear Thy Voice, and live :
Calling each sheep, by name. Whence being raised,
As the glad flowers, which Spring-time lift their heads
From Winters sod, towards Suns returning warmth :
They íssuing, fróm deep shádow of Worlds Grave ;
Shall, incorruptible, be to Thee caught up ;
To meet Thee, ín that Thy KINGDOM, in the skies.
He said ; and, turning him, (as those that sleep ;)
Laid down in Underworld, again his head,
Mongst souls that rest in silent death.
We stood
In our unworthiness, the while, dismayed.
In our dark breasts there remained little breath.
And that, in speechless utterance, we bréathed towards
The INFINITE EAR, that hears above the stars.
To WHOM ascend áll prayers.
We, dazing thus ;
Withdrew apart then reverently to a place,
Prepared in Bosom of the Earth : where us,
Was given to rest our feet ; and meditate
Awhile ; of all things lately happened to us.

In Nazara, a village-town of Galilea ;

Dwelled in of Jews and mingled alien kin,
The most, from Over-Jordan : little as then,
(As beyond Jewry,) of Jewrys Jews, esteemed :
Grew up from his womb-birth, the child Jeshúa :
Reputed Son of one who wrought in wood ;
A devout man, of Davids royal line.
Unlettered, in meticulous discipline,
Tradition saith, of priests and scribes, he was.
Little we, óf his pensive years of youth,
In our new Greekish scriptures, find recorded.
And of his éarly manhood even less.
His brethren, dwelling under Josephs roof ;
And daily dipping with him, ín one dish ;
According to the custom of those parts :
On Miriams son, the Book saith, believed not ;
What day, come to full age, Jeshúa rose up,
(A spirit is come upon him !) and from midst
Them all : to preach glad-tidings, to the House
Of Jacob, (the Jews' former prophets' wont ;)
From Upland Nazaras streets, went Jéshua forth.
Nathless he preached not openly, as yet ;
Fearful of Rulers ánd to be cut off,
Before his time. Witnessed the signs he wrought,
In all mens sight ; that He *The-Anointed* was.
Hunger and thirst, wayfaring ; doing good
To all men ; he endured, watch, weariness :
Nor seldom lackt night-lodging, where he passed.

The poor, the merciful, the pure in heart,
And peacemakers, his lips blessed. The words he preached ;
Were full of more than prophets' light and force.
Men, in whose being, was an indwelling spirit :
Which thé unrighteousness of this World wounds ;
Of soul-empiercing lofty eloquence ;
Words of whose mouths, were oft, as rushing wheels,
Of a devouring flame ; from THRONE of Heaven !
Such as not found before or after, in
The hearts of men of any other Nation.
Till day when priests and elders, him arraigned,
Of blasphemy ; and chárged to be an Evil-dóer :
And Him delivered to the Roman Power ;
In eve of the Jews' Passover, sergeants sent,
Jews' elders him to take. They found, Jeshúa,
After the sacred Supper, with the Twelve ;
In certain ólive-yard ; whére their wont was ;
Withdraw them, with the Master, from Worlds noise.
He bowed Himself, (whilst slumbered those,) in prayer ;
Three times unto the ground. They Jéshua approached ;
And apprehended.

Night-long then endured
Jeshúa of Nazareth; spit upon, scourged and scorned:
Buffeted, smitten with rods, and with mens palms;
Mockt of lewd soldiers' in the common hall;
And Him deriding, for His Kingship claimed
Of Israel; they have crowned, with wreathed sharp thorns:
And men have cast on Him a scarlet robe.
And put a reed, for sceptre, in His right hand;
And bending knees before Him, they cried, *Hail*!
And, with a reed, they smote Him on the head.
But day being come; into the Citys street;
Jeshúa, from soldiers' guard-house, is led forth:
To suffer the last ígnominy of Gentile death:
Death, that wont be, ah! of slaves and murderers.
Lent month is in: rime lay on Zions hill.
Is scab of ice, in all Her ways unclean.
Chill, ere yet fully dawn, is morrows breath.
Charge Cæsars soldiers on that meek bowed neck:
Cross-tree, was framed, an old tradition saith,
(Tree of that soil,) of weighty olive wood.
Bearing Jeshúa his cross, is he led forth;
With the accustomed guard, four legionaries;
To that polluted place, without the gates;

Where men, condemned for crimes, were put to death.
Follow Jeshúa, the prophet of Nazareth, forth;
A fleering rabble rout. From them apart;
Come, shrouded women, wailing. For all men
Have, even his own; the while their Lord forsaken:
Fearing to be accused, to have been with him.
The way is slipper, and pást now Zions port;
Fainted Jeshúas knees, forspent, forwatched.
And he sank down, long lacking kindly rest,
And sustenance; néath burden of pagan cross.
On one that way returning towards Zions gate,
Lay hands Romes soldiers. They that man enforce,
To bear the Condemneds load.
Midst wife-folk, walk
Lo Martha and Miriam; and in company with them,
Come certain Galilean widows, sorrowing:
Which of their slender substance, ministered to him:
In thóse long weary uneven stony paths;
In his late journeying thence up to the Feast.
They wend by, piteously beating their lean breasts:
Which, with their tears, His blesséd feet have washed.
Sore mourn they for that Master, which had raised
Their dead to life; in Whom all healing was:

Unto Whom they lookt, that Israel should be saved.
Reached to that áccursed, ábhorred, corrupt place;
Of strewed skulls named, (men ween,) of sinners' deaths:
The air, come tardy light, a thrilling frost:
Wan, goeth, with misty vapour, days Sun up:
And looketh askance, on guilty Israels coast.

Those holy limbs, Romes *carnifex* hath despoiled
Of raiment; with then mallet in his hand;
His palms he, as láy Jeshúa, splayd on ground;
Hath nailed upon, (íntóllerable smart!)
The rood-beam, and feet twain. Him aiding then
Romes soldiers; he, (blood trickling on the wood,)
Up-rears the accurséd tree! They heave it then,
Into its mortais. Hang twain malefactors,
Jews crucified, with him, one on either part.
Days tardy hours draw on; and now is noon.
And is now afternoon: whiles swoons that JUST ONE, in long passion, of His sinless flesh;
Born of a woman. Jews which that way pass,
Stand to upbraid the so-named *Prophet of Nazareth*:
Ribalds revile Him from nigh Zions walls.
With weeping, shrinking women, that regarded

Afar off: stood, the saints' tradition saith,
His Mothers sisters. Looking up from death;
When, mongst them, saw Jeshúa his mother Miriam:
He, her son, her comforted with last words of Love.
Sith, darkened ín infírmity of húman flesh;
Seemed Jéshuas dívine spirit; when gazing up
Towards heaven, he cried aloud, My GOD, my GOD!
Ah! why hast THOU passed by me! In that saying,
He bowed the head; and gave the sinless ghost.
To prove if were He dead, one of Romes soldiers;
Jeshúas side piercéd, with his pagan lance.
Thus ended He in young years, adjudged to death;
By his own Peoples Rulers and chief priests:
SHEPHERD in Israel; and the lively Hope,
Of them, whom He had chosen out of the World.

Of dismayed loving hands, being lifted down
The MASTERS corse: they it washed from bloody stains:
And weeping, having swathed in linen bands;
(Being preparation of Jews' Sabbath eve:)
Before set of that Sun, bare forth: and laid;
Nigh to the place, in Josephs garden-grave;
(He, who erewhile to Jeshúa sought by night;)

Hewn in the rock, and was thát newly made :
And went each sorrowing down, to his own house.

But sabbath past, come morrow of Jews' new week ;
That holy Temple, of Jéshuas vírgin flesh,
Revived. And vénerable Tradition saith ;
LIGHT of the World, o'er Whom prevail could not
The Power of Death ; who téstified of Himself,
That He, SON óf the EVER BLESSED, was :
Rose and went forth.
And certain days conversed
He with the Twelve, unto whóm His wounds He showed.
And, though the same tradition saith, He passed
Through even shut doors ; He brake, in Jewry, again
And Galilee both, with them, the bread of men.
Which dured till morn when last He led them forth ;
From the Holy City, on Ólivet's craggéd mount.
And thence, in their eyes' seeing, ascending up :
He that was pierced, His arms outstretcht, to bless
Those few, obedient to His Word, He left ;
As sheep mongst wolves, on this Worlds trustless ground.

Such then have we propounded unto us ;
For our instruction, and our souls' High Trust ;
In this Worlds dark uneasy dwelling-place ;
In brief life of our flesh, midst daily Press.
We as men, to human reason, must hold fast.
If aught there be beyond Mans reasons reach :
We thereto accéde by FAITH, and not by sight.
The Testimony óf a venerable Book,
Is that which we possess ; which not soon writ,
But ín next generation after this ;
With certain letters, handed down to us ;
Of the first saints, prophetic sectaries ;
Through pious ages, whole and incorrupt ;
Not in Jews' sacred, but in Greeks' World-speech.
Reaching those godly spirits up from Earths dust ;
And things corruptible óf this slough of flesh ;
To án inheritánce, which fadeth not ;
A crown of glory in heaven ; for them laid up :
They as new-begotten in their minds, raught not ;
Of Kings and Rulers to be disesteemed :
Nor even to give their bodies to be burned,
For His names sake.
And seekers óf right paths ;
Great múltitude, mongst all nations of the Earth ;
To that their faithful testimony ; which they left,
For our souls health, and Hope of Life in Death ;

To-day, in travail of their souls, resort :
As moths unto a taper in the dark.
What mind may, from Abysm of vast Deep,
Of unremembrance ; (Ocean-ground, where lieth
It 'spersed ;) the human sooth of long-dead age,
Retrieve ; or question powder in lost grave ?
What may a soul, in days wherein we live ;
When knowledge, is by so much more, increased ;
As semblable to right Image of the Sooth ;
Which Heaven, at first, implanted in Mans breast :
Receive ? Where is that touchstone, whereby might
It be examined, and once throughly tried !
If we hold ónly tó our fantásies ;
Shall we not haply sin against the Líght ?
Who is there that familiarly hath conversed,
With People of Israels soil, in their own speech :
(Of customs like, like tongue and kindred blood,
With old-times Jews ;) hath not continually marked ;
Their marvel-talk, (such springs in minds untaught;)
Which groweth, and groweth, and passeth saner
thought.
And THOU great Mother Asia ; which our feet,
In Thy great length and breath traverse beneath :
Great Womb of Nations, and of many Faiths ;
From ancient days, with many sacred books :
(Whereas is Israel líttle in Time and Place :)
Remainest without, most part, in unbelief ;

Though twice nigh thousand more Suns years be past!
Help, FATHER of HEAVEN! LORD GOD of the whole Earth;
Hear our soul's lowing at THY THRONE of GRACE!
SEARCHER of hearts! To THEE, we in Worlds dark;
Stretch forth continually our adoring hands!
Help THOU, All-FATHER! Help THOU them that seek;
In their few life-days, Way of Light and Truth:
Nor, if blínd we stumble, ímpute guilt to us!
Can it bé, that thát we órph'lins, *Reason* call;
A parcel is only of Infinite Dívine Truth:
Like spot, which dims all-brightness of Suns Face?
Be then we founding ón Realities?
In nonage óf the World, seemed unto Man
The Universe human. We, of ríper age;
May nothing such, in Natures Work perceive.

Mansoul still cavelling thus: there fell upon us
(Whiles yet we stood, in our empassioned mood,
Amazed, confused;) new impulse and increased.
Yet once, our glass showed wind-scourged wallowing flood,
Where billows ride on billows. Mid-seas Deep
Is, that we we view above.
In Underworld,
Be fewer here dim galleries of the Dead.

Wherein glide spirits, from wide-round compassing coasts.
Mongst whom, drown'd souls passed, dripping fróm sea-deaths.
(Alas, their strangle-deaths, in foundered ships!
That with them lie to rot, on seas salt ground.)
Before us, whither now we haste; above
This great *repositorium* of Worlds Dead:
Mirrored we, in our glass, see Golden Region.
Is that of Westing Sun; where át days end,
In living World, He droopeth below salt Main.
Is that the Outer Sea, which girds the World.
We sea-gates wide do presently pass beneath;
Twixt ópposed Africs and Europas coasts:
And towards Bootes and Arcturus mount.
We anew view swart waves' flowing wilderness!
O'er brow of following tumult of salt flood;
Go gallant ships, that know their liquid paths
Towards haven of land; and whíte-winged clamorous
Sea-mews, in their sharp ledges of sea rocks.
On each hand, dry lands shores loom, in our glass,
Of warlike Nations, and who in World best;
Can handle the machinal arts. Nathless,
Is their part less of spiritual Light!
Than that of dwellers, ín Worlds vast East parts.

Where, over-against the Muses' Isles, we pass :
We a rumbling seabord hear to sound above,
And to resound. Hark ! long-reared wave-rows break,
And race o'er some wide strand.

Which passed beyond :
Huge fearful Thunder-voice, of homicide WAR,
Bellows ! Our glass shows clóud, o'erhángs the World,
That rains down gore !
MANSOUL. What hóme-coming is here ?
Must thus we turn, to live again on ground ;
That, (Voice divine !) we longed in Underworld ;
Yet once to see, and see the Sun, so sore ?
THE VOICE. I do to-day perceive is all West World,
One horrid fold, of many Nations' War !
MANSOUL. Say furthermore.
THE VOICE. I do discern, is this
War-guilt of homicide Rulers, whose lewd life,
Is Nations' death. Was known, Kings of the World,
Of late conspired, malgré all covenants ;
For lordship of the Earth ; which being achieved
By scelerate arms ; should all men be their thralls :
And the heritage of the ages, should be theirs.
MANSOUL. High Heavens ! beat down the barbarous insolence,

Of those false kings : and their fond bauble crowns,
Cast in the draught-pit ! Or what rests to us,
Of Hope on Earth ?
THE VOICE. They dunghills shall embrace,
And become all mens curse : their evil names
Abhor shall generations to be born.
MANSOUL. What ravaged blighted Country-side
is this,
Our mirror shows ?
THE VOICE. Belges' War-wasted march :
Well-peopled late, now ploughed with iron shot.
Her fruitful fields lie soaked, with massacre-blood.
See smouldering villages, past repair, unroofed !
Leap to heaven, wide flames of crofts and granges
fired.
Are famous cities burning, like a wood.
MANSOUL. Who hath done this ?
THE VOICE. Invading Hunnish hordes,
World's impious enemies, this Hell-horror made.
Havoc ! yell their churls throats : that from brute-
beasts ;
Can only be distinguished by Mans voice.
By their outrageous deeds, those willed to make
A sty, a sink, a stink, West human World.

There, like to locusts' swarm, in the Element ;
Flies deadly leaden sleet, o'er field of blood.

Hundred leagues long, enránged, lie ópposed armies,
In their war-trenches digged. Their raging strife,
Ceaseth not day nor night upon Earths face.
Men, madding ; give and receive wounds and death.
A thousand fall, each moment, without life.
Rend shrieking iron bolts thé empóisoned element;
Dip from miles height : and shattering where they light ;
With din trememdous, above thunder-clap :
Slings each one widewhere, hundred wounds and death :
That widows long, and orphans shall lament.

Blind hazard is abroad, of infinite deaths.
FATES, wavering-winged, flit to and fro, betwixt
Their parts. Are five times thousand-thousand, told ;
War-carcases húddled already, ín strange ground ;
Of young men soldiers. Every rood of land,
With squalid crusts lies blotted of gore-blood.
Perished in their dead loins ; (on your false pates,
Inhúman mad cúrsed begetters of this War !)
The children, which of them should have been born :
For the continuance of Mans World to come.
Mongst souls, of battle-bleeding multitude ;

Which this day untimely, háve their generous spirits
Breathed forth on living ground: lo, companies pass;
Known, by their comely looks, pale now in death:
To be of those, our Island Empire sends
Forth, of her valorous youth, to fight for life,
Of the whole Earth; gainst criminal enemies.
Hail Britains sons, which seen have glorious deaths;
Your memories dwell aye in our Island hearts,
(Fallen lífelorn, in your ranks, on your prowd faces!)
And shall in centuries yet to come. With Christ,
Descend, with honour, tó eternal rest!
Belovéd young men: (A fire is in our hearts;
Hot swelling tide of wrath, for your young deaths!)
That did not only your forefathers' worth,
Match to the full; opposing your young breasts;
To the foul tyrants venom, steel and shot;
And saviours of the World were in your flesh,
In a strange Land; but ádded have new wealth,
Of honour íncorruptible únto us.

THE VOICE. They gave their all, with joy, for Countrys sake.

LOUD ECHO. *Death seemed them joy, for Mother-Countrys sake!*

They árrive hither from Main Continent
Where those nefarious cattle in guise of wights;
Brute beasts, defiled Gods ground. They, human kind;
(Naught reverencing their mothers' womanhood;)
Fearing no God, unspeakably prophaned.
They poisoned wells, sowed germs of Pestilence;
Cut fruit-trees down, and burned the harvest fields;
Gave all to pillage, rapine, razed all walls,
Of human habitation. As rend hounds
A stone; the very soil, in feral rage;
They utterly have subverted and defaced.
MANSOUL. Say, O divine Foster Voice, who set them on,
THE VOICE. A mountebank felon, crowned, was their High Captain;
Worm! arrogating style, to his mad self;
Of Deputy Ruler of Gods Universe.
Frown of whose Tamerlanish countenance;
He deemed, as he struts forth, should quell the World.
Worlds crime, this long had cherished, he hugged close.
While-ere, fond childhoods whisper, in false breast;
Dark fantasy inflaming his presumptuous youth;
And working éver since, ín his recreant thought.

To out-Cæsar Cæsar, his self-pleasing thought.
But Cæsars was a soul magnanimous,
Clement; and ás it longeth to noble worth;
Midst greatest deeds, full alway of knightly parts.
Cæsar waged war, with honour; this fellow hath,
It dastardized.
He, who át no time rebuked;
The inhuman, the Satánic outrages;
Of those brute kerel-herds whom he commanded:
Chief Patron is, of áll their infamies.

What dísmayed cónfused voice is that we hear?
Lo, a drooping fugitive multitude, rich and poor;
Our glass shows, thronged together, a thick Press.
All midst salt bitter reek, of homesteads burned:
Fathers, wives, maidens, babes, old broken wights;
With desolate looks of Winter, in their hearts.
Bearing at back, in hand-carts, hound-carts, sacks;
What little might they save of household stuff.
Sighs of wives outraged, wailful choking sobs,
Of maidens wronged, undone; bereaved souls' críes;
Lifting to héaven lean hánds, with hunger-bleak looks!
Hark! dying muffled groans of murdered folk;
Issue from ruinous streets, whereby those pass.

Brained were they, aye, and mauled to death, at
their own hearths !
Fencing their womens honour, from Hell-force,
Of outlaws from Gods Covenant of mankind.

When we regard again, in Mérlins glass :
On upper path, within that breach of Earth ;
Our happier gaze is fixt. Beat thick our hearts ;
That leap up in our throats and utterance choke ;
Whilst gather to our eyelids scalding drops.
Descend there singly, lion-héarted spirits !
A token beams, on éach magnanimous breast !
'T is that which Britains sovereign, (Gods true
knight,
Belovéd of his People,) with the applause,
Of Five free generous Nations, under arms ;
Confers, for singular valour, ín war-field.
How comely is their souls stature, amongst the
rest ;
Where all wrought mainly, and strove in sacred
arms ;
To uphold the honour of their Nations House :
Opposing their instincted patriot breasts ;
To elemental iron machinal force.
Are they, their grateful Countrys Praise, hence-
forth ;
On whom we stare, we gaze, in part abasht ;

That we, which elder rest, might bear no part;
In hazards, aches, death-horror of slaughter-field;
With those, (late, children !) thus before us passed.
The supreme smile, yet blossoms on their lips:
Wherewith those gave, great-hearts their best, lifes breath,
In a Strange Land; with GOD, the World to save.
Who in golden sacred dream, go by aloft,
Hold way towards Heroes' Hall, of Worlds West parts:
That riseth, before unseen, now in our view;
As we ourselves advance, in Merlins glass.
With thresholds many, and walls of burnished bronze;
That to all quarters face. Who foremost pass,
Even as we gaze, to rúne-graven porch approach.
HOUSE of great hero-spirits lent to Earth;
From age to age, souls nurtured of the Gods;
Is that proud Hall: where hanged be, by the walls,
Lo, war-bruised shields, glaives, mails, victorious spears:
Which wrought deliverance, both by land and seas;
In many a glorious world-renowned emprise.
Who therein wait lo, issue! Stern glad looks
Are theirs, that God-like champions, stand magnanimous,

Enranged ; all crowned with oak-leaves their prowd heads.
They, with that Flower of Britains youth, converse.
And, ádjudged brethren, worthy of that proud Place ;
That from Suns Western shores, to them approach
From glorious deaths ; they únto them right hánds,
Extend, lo of fellowship ; and now welcome in :
Where purged all enmity is from human breasts.
Lo, enter all together ; and seemed stream forth
A dívine radiance, from that gilded porch ;
Which opened of itself ; and in the same ;
Thénce solemn dream of Music to ascend.

BOOK V

FROM UNDERWORLD RETURNED
A DAY OF THE SUN

BOOK V

Meseemed I waked from heavy dream of sleep ;
In Grave-pit of dead ages of the Earth :
And viewing Lands ruin, Wars massacres, in our glass.
What booteth it then, methought to living Earth,
Revert ; to see Worlds light, but bleeding hearts ?
Is not this Rest of souls, already passed ;
Better than lífes-day, as mírrored in our glass ?

Take comfort ! seemed then whisper in my breast,
That dívine Voice : *Not yet the World is lost.*
Whence gázing up, in sides of that Earth-breach ;
As from long Winters murk, and desolate Night ;
Like that which whelms on dwellers, in North Parts ;
Whose frost-bound season sees no Sun in heaven :
I ware was of new freshing breath, like that ;
Which flows at dayspring, o'er Earths hills and heath :
And gleam, with fearful joy, of heavens light.

Then, in mine heart, I thought, might I live yet ;
To once more that glad gracious smile behold,
Of Suns uprising, all with roses crowned !
When, únsealed, springs great fountain of Earths life.

Meseemed, come to myself, a quarry it was :
Wherein, with these numbed joints and sapless flanks ;
And pupils' still dark and uncertain seeing ;
O'er ledges and sharp shelves, I upward groped,
Of cliffs rock-face.
Reached, stumbling, to cliffs brink :
Uneasy it seemed to rise up thence. The stars
Be fading in their courses. Hour is when
Night-Mother, in sécret Chamber of the East ;
Travailleth and díeth, to once more Day bring forth.
Again, I dimly see wide Foster Earth !
And lo, me awaiteth an arm, like crudded milk ;
And, strong to save, lo an hand like the snow flake ;
Stretcht forth, that deigns uplift me on Earths sod :
With búdded whin beset, and hassock grass.

(*Is this Worlds field ! Rouse ! waken Minimus !*)
It is HER Voice, as music in mine ears :
Mine Albans goddess-Muse, me succoureth.

THE MUSE. *Up now! Is this thy Foster Land thou seest.*
Is hence but little now to thine own hearth.
Nathless thy destiny is determined thus.
Mansouls Dream-City, thou must erewhile tread.
And know, is that suspent twixt Mother-Earth
And Father-Sky. Whither, from all Worlds coasts,
Dream-spirits ascend, in slumber of their flesh :
Short fit of Lifes sweet rest ; which recreates,
Both men and Gods. Moreover, I shall thee teach,
(Take of this all-heal herb, on thy tongue erst !)
A deathless chant thereof. There blameless spirits
Seek, that were them revealed, before their deaths,
Some token sure, touching souls' last dark Hope ;
Which hidden is, fróm foundation of the Earth.

Sun lifts now, uprísing ín His mighty strength,
From sleep ; Líon-like, His gréat-maned glórious head ;
Crowned with first rays, o'er Threshold of the World.
A moment paused, He seemeth to stretch Himself ;
And take upon Him, purple royal weed.
Like eagle then, on golden wings, He soars,
In heavens crystal Steep ; His golden beams,

Kindling the aery skies aloft so wide ;
And Earth, with kindly warmth.

Is Britains Muse,
This blesséd morn, arrayed in homespun weed ;
Which, in our uplands, glad-eyed maidens use.
Save that her shining kirtle óf lambs' fleece ;
Such is, as hardly might in hundred folds ;
Being of rare golden hew, the like be found.
Is broidered Her bright camis with Spring-flowers,
Of hill and mead ; which in Isle Britain blow.

Like to an ivory tower, Her gracious neck ;
Is girt with pearls, upon sheen golden lace :
Treasure of restless waves, on Albans shore.
Gold tire, Her forehead wreathes and amber locks ;
A wimple veils, She holds before her face ;
Of samite, subtle as is gossamer-weft :
As dreading taint, of dead great Underworld ;
And corrupt darkness, whence now I arrived.

The Muses hand, as She before me went :
Beckoned, I should in field Her follow forth.
Well as I might, I sued, with tottering pace ;
Stiff yet ; risen fróm íron pit, of Worlds Great Death.

Lap of her kerchief, lifting the Winds breath ;
Revealed locks sheen, as is the harvest-sheaf.
Mingled with sunbeams ; falling on Her nape.
Her twin bent brows, in that She turned a moment,

Her cóuntenance; were líke to that bow, conjoined,
Of Amaltheas horns ; set midst the stars :
Her eyes seemed crystal wells ; and their glance was
Full of undying light and deathless gladness.
And yet therein a looking lurked, not all
Of solace, that befits the divine state :
(Immortals, may not sigh, for mortals dead,
Though they be sad ;) of Virgin Mothers grief.
Methought I, ón Her habit, lately shed,
Had seen drops pearling, for Her Islands slain ;
In the Great War, which no more may return.

In what days, it may please the gentle Muse ;
To walk unwist, on Albans breathing hills ;
Her wont is, tó affect the herding trade :
As more than most, devoid of human fraud ;
Her soul abhors.
And was, for Colins sake ;
Erewhile most tuneful shepherd in these fields ;
(Whose heaven-breathed chants, whose lays empassionate,
Aspiring raptures, like pure lovers' flames ;
First the rude ore refined of Britains verse :)
To me, least mongst his heirs, She favour showed.
Colin is dead, lies Hobbinol lapt in lead,
And Cuddy ís no more ; and long ago

Was Rosalind laid in grave. So shall be we,
(And who in Time to come shall emule us ;)
Which yet live, láte survivors of his crew.
But shall his, heaven-derived, sweet chívalrous measures :
Still breathing grace and happy influence ;
Continue through Worlds ages, unforgot.

Nor seld is, leaving Her august estate ;
The Muse repairs, in days of shearing feast ;
To some blithe herding cote ; whence heard is sound
Of mérry-make, and tuneful shepherds pipe.
Or else where blows proud goat-herd, with crisp lip ;
On shrill row of bright reeds, his warbeling note :
And hinds and lasses, there together met ;
All glad and fain, dance madrigals with deft foot.
Or Winter nights, come days of snow and frost ;
Where folk, to some nigh cattle-stead, resort :
To tidings tellen, of their Country-side ;
At bountiful warm hearth ; where cheer is both
Among the guests, of flickering embers round ;
And fear of dancing shadows on the wall :
Or where some handfast maiden shall be wed,
To her true love : (she Pride of all the stead.)
And gathered joyous to a lordlings hall ;

Where newly sanded neat is all the floor ;
With thyme strewed, and sweet-smelling juniper :
Be neighbour folk, from all the cantred* round ;
All in their best array, with holiday looks ;
That juncates bring and gifts of clotted cream,
And honey-combs. And when the bride is crowned,
Begins the bag pipes' merry mynstrelsy
And often chanted is the rustic rhyme ;
And who look-on, with oft clapped hands applaud :
Our beldames, I have heard, opinion hold ;
Mongst maidens fresh, as May ; their bright crisp locks,
As flower of broom, with kerchiefs on their heads ;
All simple as primroses ; that heavenly Maid,
Is very uneath, when would She not be kenned ;
To be discerned : save for derne starry light
Streams from Her eyes. Wherein shine beauty and grace,
Above all saying.
Soon She, aspect mild,
Turned ; and me seeing fóllow, lánguishing thus ;—
Withheld her divine steps : till when I might
Again draw nigh.
Beckoned her gracious hand
Then ; Yond hill-flanks, to brow, I should ascend :

* *Or Hundred.*

Whereo'er white drift-away of cáttle, I discerned.
(Dimly as yet, dawn light was in the sky.)
And in that seemed me, spake the Muses voice ;
Melodious more than any shepherds reed :
(All words of Her ripe lips, meseemed to sound ;
That Golden World, when Gods with men
conversed ;
Elect and true, wéighed in just balances :
But tongue should fáil me, would I thém rehearse:)
She said, to comfort of my weariness ;
This day should I taste bread, and be refreshed.
With wand in Her right hand, She Goddess bright,
Then toucht me ; in me, sore bruised and lacking
breath ;
Reviving kindly force and hardiness.
Again She passed before me, with new steps ;
Of ever-springing youth, grace, heavenly gladness.
Reached to that going-up, in grassy plot,
Again she stayed. And, *Fosterling speed thee Gods !*
She quoth : and faded, lady immortal bright ;
From my dim eyes' dull seeing, as morrows mist.
The footprints of her dívine feet, I kissed.

Alone I stand, twixt dawning skies and grass.
No more dread Night of Underworld, I tread :
Dim covert galleries, wanting living breath ;
Full all of ghostly terrors. Well-nigh made,

New day is of the World. Yet cold night-drops
Hang on this teeming herb.
Hark! What is that?
A Spring-tide nightingáles last blissful note,
Under clear stars: that waked the dew-steeped night;
With his empassioned lauds' and nocturnes' chant;
Embayed amídst sheen thicket flickering leaves:
Where shrouds and cherisheth his plain-song mate,
Their fledgling birds. Hark! late lewd cuckoo calls.
Breaks forth small medleyed babble, of feathered throats!
New day unfoldeth as a bud: each plot,
Where Shadows lurked, with tears steeped of the night;
Where gin new wandering airs to gently breathe;
Gilds Suns uprising streams, with cheerful warmth.
Neatherds I hear, else shepherds shrilling pipe,
And yonder, á loud hállo! from hill paths.
Now and nigheth One hitherward, fluting in his fist.
Out of this misty drift, which gins disperse;
I herdgrooms see, with hounds and flocks, approach.
'T is Saxon CÆDMON, warden of the folds;
That goeth before them, hipping on his staff:

Bond-servant tó an Abbey of holy women ;
Whose belfry and réd tile-stones, tímbered amidst
Thick oaken wald, that lards the Minsters swine ;
Now partly in yonder slade, from hence be seen.
Bowed with old rheums, this guardian of the folds ;
With hoary beard, low hanging on his breast :
Likens those old saints' effigied images :
Whose pórtraitures, éven untó our days, remain ;
Blackened with eld and smoke and grossly limned ;
On vénerable cloisters' párgetted walls.
Cædmon, for all he goeth in servile weed,
Rough wadmel coat and sárk of unbleached line ;
With galages on his feet ; is he whom men,
Master-song-smith, esteemed on English tongue,
In his life-time. He úntaught, save of heaven ;
Makes canticles of the Lamb and Holy Faith ;
Which daily are sungen, in their Minster Church.
Pass forth that herding crew and woolly flocks.
Today the weanling lambs wend with their dams :
That bleating, o'er hill-bent of new-sprung grass ;
Browse tardily forth. They butt, they únder-push
The foster-dugs ; and wanton, with new life,
Which tingles in their blood.

Is Cædmon left ;
His sheep and herds dispersed : he seeth me not.
The sire attends, upleaning on his bat ;
The ewes' returning, tó noons couching-place.
And meditates some new hymn, in devout thought ;
For HILDA his vénerable agéd abbess.
Spring-halt is he on Earth, whose spirit so fast,
To heavenward híeth.
As clímbing lavrock soars,
With hardy flickering wings, gainst the Sun-streams ;
And fills with his birds raptures skys wide height :
So Cædmon lifting, with transported looks,
His soul from sod ; attunes his devout notes :
To that celestial choir, he him seemeth in spirit,
To hear of angels, in the holy height.
As for me I, ón that bent, found nigh a bush
Of broom : where sheltering might I lodge beneath,
Pillowed on soft sweet herb and drowse a space.
Hungered I was, my bones were full of aches,
Nor might as yet sustain my feeble sight ;
Bright living ray, of Suns uprising light.
And ever, in my thought, I sought insight,
In glee-craft, óf eld-fathers of the Art,
In this our Land ; which mongst folk, heathen late ;
(As time then was,) sufficed to light mens hearts.

When I awaked, ascended in his strength,
Is this days blesséd Sun to undern height.
And o'er hill-brow, with golden knops bedight,
And daisies as the stars ; that herding fellowship,
And hounds and flocks again behold approach !
Their loitering ewes troop hither with full cuds.
That bold herd-crew, lads tawny in wind and wet,
Go girt in long say coats and pilches rough.
And each hind bears, his sinewed bow at back ;
And sheaf of well-fledged arrows in a case ;
And bag of ready sling-stones at his belt :
Their flocks to ward, against the prowler wolf.
The woolly trains, come to noons couching-place :
The herdgrooms stand, to number o'er their stock :
That gathered with drooped craigs, sheep behind sheep ;
Stánd shadowing, each one ín anothers breach.
They tell them o'er, none lacketh.
Gathers, gone forth
A lad, his arms'-full, stover ; and kindles, cast
Down in the winds eye, lo, the climbing flame :
Which all-embracing, licketh up the turf,
Anon. That herd-folk deem this bitter reek ;
Should drive away the brieze.

Their barking curs,
Left then, to mind the Abbeys drowsing stock ;
(Those course out oft, whiles these together stoop :)
Tall grooms, with unkempt glibs, all reverent dofft
Their hoods, now 'sembled round the shepherds' sire ;
Attend their fathers giving-thanks to hear ;
Before noon meat.
Lo, full of holy thought,
Thrall Cædmon lifteth up anew his looks
And horny palms to Heavenward, whither mounts
His lowly spirit ; where dwelleth ALL-FATHER GOD.
Take on those rude-limned looks of his, new grace ;
Whiles, after Saxon sort, lay-wright, his lips
Quoth :
Herry* we thé Worlds LORD,
In HIS wonder-works :
With the Everliving WORD ;
WHICH dwelleth with HIM on height.
HE ALL-FATHER shaped green Earth ;
All birds therein and beasts ;
The Sea also and fish :
And Man made Lord thereof.

* *Praise.*

ONE-FOLD in THREE, unseen,
As is winds-breath unseen:
HE eternally doth remain;
Above the Sun, ALL-MIGHT:
WHO giveth meat to all Breath.

Store have they of bárley-cakes, baked ón the hearth,
For their noon-meat, and cheese ín théir hide-scrips;
And for their bever wig, in goat skins tough;
And some have sallets pluckt, by the field paths.
Those seen me, a stránger, go-by not far off;
There, one from the herd-crew, ran, shouting forth:
Which bade me, in Cædmons name, (their Abbeys use;)
To turn and eat, of such cheer as they have.
We sit at meat, on sweet green Fostér Earth;
Our table thís spread web, of freshing grass.
All cheerful chat; and grows their most discourse,
As herdfolk use, of feed, of wool, of flocks:
Of ewes mi-went, and last years eanlings lost;
Wolves rent. They tell then o'er the Minsters stock;
Brake-lands, this foreyears tilth; last harvest-dearth.

What freke runs hitherward, and now coasteth to us;

Ill-favoured wight, loud shouting o'er wide walks ?
Nor tiding glad bears This, who now árrives ;
Breathless from running ; smirched with sweat and dust.
'T is shock-haired goat-herd Cuth ; who found new breath,
Cries *Inrode ! Word now lured, from craig to craig ;*
Came long-keels yestre'en, under Stromnœs in :
Rovers those ! Esterlings, from North seas far parts.
Their ship-carles be gone up ; they harry and burn
All steddings, as wont is of heathen folk ;
And slay all life, they meet with, in their paths.
Their fires were seen to glow inland last night.
Confusedly thus, quoth he, twixt his heaved breaths ;
And hied, without leave-taking, further forth.
CÆDMON. Men of the friths. Three times, I in the *fyrd*,*
Have fought, with men, from the North Way their likes :
Nigh this ; tall steel-helmed wights, with long-hair locks.
Last time was that, in field Graveholm now hight ;
Day when our hosting brake their proud shield-wall :
Then great sword-swathe! On Bloodaxe their tall yarl ;

* *A Saxon Levy-in-Arms.*

Girt in his over-slop and shirt of mail,
On whose broad shield, stood heathen rune-staves graved ;
Fighting him nígh, I ran, under his targe ;
Calling on GOD my Helper ; and smote him down.
His twibill hangs now on our Abbey wall ;
Which in his fall had hurt me in this foot :
Whereof I halt thus yet.
A pagan kin,
With hearts of wolves ; in many-banked snake-keels,
With painted prows, their shields hanged longs the bords,
Those row and sail ; and mostly on Christen coasts.
Next Stromnœs is a stathe, where those put in.
Is that where Deiras cliffs stoop to salt waves ?
('T was then as now, in days of the new leaf.)
We intending our eyes thither, behold mount
Reek of their pagan fires ; and aye the more,
To íncrease, whiles we gaze !
Leap on their feet,
Cædmons stout sons, with burning hearts, to arms.
They make bare soon their ewen trusty bows :
Spend them and string, with stern and steady force.
Their azure pupils flame. Each seeth in thought ;

Stripe of his wind-tosst arrow, on fóemans crest.
As Cædmon would, they dwell yet, some brief space:
The whiles that godly father, went apart;
Wrestleth with heaven. Kneeling, he supplicates,
For Land and hearth. They briefly in noonday heat,
So rest: ready each, howbeit splayed on green grass;
On elbow leaned, his chin stayed on his hand.
Nor long they wait.
The ancient come anon,
Rise that bold brood. One blows on his reed-pipe,
Shrill war-like note. Each hínd, his trooping flock,
He hath hastily gáthered, drives to shelter forth.
They hill-brow pass; descending now with speed,
To Abbey walls.
Runners, warned by Cuths voice;
Already are hieing through the Wapentake.
Assemble you in arms, drive in your beasts!
Those cry, they yell. Hark! solemn 'larum-note;
Of the Lands Cloister-bells bronze hollow throat;
From yondér lap resóunding, of green hills;
Warning all Cristen folk.

As I rose up:
Glad Venerable Cædmon to have seen;
Lay-smith, as in old life-days of his flesh:
I saw no man. My steps amidst my dream,
Translated were to wide West-Saxon march.
Lay Spring-times golden smile, all gracious mild,
On dunes and denes there likewise, of Gods ground.
After long Winters teen, is sweet this breath,
Of blossomed boughs and mantle of tender green,
In field and heath; whereon now softly blows,
Whitening each spire of grass, attempered wind.
And heavens loft rings, with ditty of lavrocks voice.
In a néw excess of spirit, methought I walked,
Where only curlews cried and swallows stoopt;
Quartering wild field, and hares played without dread,
Of human paths.
As fór me, one of late
Returned from Shadow of former Ages' Death;
To Suns glad eye and Warmth, on Earths green breast:
Fulfilled with bliss of heart, I all day went;
In sweet-breathed bent; and gathered in mine hand;
Flowers' gentle living gems, of every kind;

Which there, fair daughters of the Sun and dew,
Did blissful blow. Were wind-flowers, party red
And white, with blue-bells rife, in dim wood-side :
Pale ladies' smocks ; demurely all arrayed,
With bowed down head, as each had been a bride.
Pied daisies, crowned each with a silver fret ;
Starring, mongst cups of gold, in thicket grass ;
With speedwell gentle, under woodbine bush.
And meadow-sweet, whose gracious plumes aloft,
So nobly meek, our every sense doth greet ;
And milk-worts triple hewed in open lay :
Where, o'er the close-cropt-herb, wafts honied breath,
In Sún-streams ; óf bee-nodding thyme and whin.
And o'er all thís, in stíll sequestered place ;
Where I a moment tarried, to take breath ;
I purple pasque flowers found, in Sun-kisst heath,
With bliss of heart ; which blossomed from the sod.
Whereof I record find, in Chronike old ;
How wingéd spirits, of Angels' heavenly race ;
Stoop from these vaulted skies, what day they pass,
In Ember tide ; as their wont each year is ;
To pluck them ; and bear ín their bosoms forth.
That lowly, in royal raiment, those prefigure ;
His coming, ín heavens glory, with His saints.
Know further, that Culdees of holy life,
Which walk apart, and dwell in desert place ;

Nourished of only herbs, their mortal part:
This, with pure eyes, have diverse times beheld.
Thus putting flower to flower, my langour late
Dispersed, and come again my lively spirits:
(What joy, in this quick air, is sally forth;
In vast Paviliōn of Sky-bent and Earth!
Gilt, full of silent Harmony, of the Sun-God:)
I day-long went, in strength of Cædmons bread;
Murmuring, as bee-fly doth, in Britain's heath;
Souls inarticulate thánksgiving to High Heaven.
And that, till Suns late going down: when seemed
Skies, hanged with arras and bright cloth of gold.
Only late hernsew, flagging her wide wings;
O'erflies lo! and training after long lank shanks;
From rushy mere, or reedy fen, to nest.
All wind is laid, which spired o'er the warm heath.

'T is eve now; and I, on these life-breathing wolds,
Approach huge antique marvel of hanging stones.*
That giants once reared, in solitary march;
Immane unwrought, save that them Titans beat;
And brayed, to those rude salvage weathered shapes:
With hámmer-stones; (thús an hóar-tradition saith!)
Ere Man was yet.
Long shadows lie out-stretcht,
Of stone-old giants' choired píllar and tránsom-work;

* *Stonehenge.*

Are far-fetcht whinstones. Come now hour to rest ;
I leaned tó a mighty píllarcraig ín their midst :
A covert, from nights wayward wind and wet.
So laid me down ; till day-spring should shine forth.

There came yet into mine unquiet thought ;
A little tale of Galfred, ere I slept :
How held once Titan-brood this upland march ;
Before the World was civil. Were these stones,
Immane, their landmarks.
Titans Mother-Earth,
In former age, engendered without Sire ;
And might, in members huge, to them derived ;
Whence shortly grown to an exceeding power
And pride ; those durst defy, in truculent mood,
The very Gods ; and were there any such.
Long, who should lead thém, in tremendous strife ;
For lordship of this Isle, assembled brethren,
They question and consult. Such fond intent,
Was cause of envy, in their enfeloned breasts.
Gainst the elders birthright cónsult all the rest,
How covertly ; in Summer day when he lay sick ;
Grim GORGOT tó supplant and dispossess,
The whiles he slept.

But he their fell intent,
(So he was subtle and sly,) wist of Winds breath ;
And divination made, by ravens' flight ;
Awaited their onset. Now was third night,
When gathered giants immane, iniquitous :
(Without habiliments, withouten sex ;
Huge-memberd, and on height, as oaks :) with mauls
And hurlbats weaponed their rude hands.
Of stars,
Shone little covert light. With one consent,
All, at Moon-rising, rose up, fróm hill-seats.
Wild is that night, with rushing weird wínd-gusts.
They silent, as they might, hurl headlong forth.
In vain their footfall, whose vast poise seemed shake ;
(As they from hill-brow unto hill brow, strode ;)
The centred Earth ; muffled thick twilight sod.
Waked by his hounds, the Monster ready was :
Who issued fróm dim threshold of his lodge.
And as smites thresher on his barn-floor, halm ;
He beat them small, he felled them, one by one ;
In fierce debate, with flail of iron-stone.
Though greatly incensed, the Titan granted life,
To Mothers sons, whereas slain, o'erthrown.
(They each lay fifty cubits stretcht on land ;)
When those, in next Suns warmth, revived from swoon :

He taking of thém, risen, infrangible oath ;
Given each their hands, twixt his victorious palms ;
That they should be his liegemen, from henceforth ;
And hold of him, their several fiefs of land.
In token whereof, he bound each one to fetch
His merestone, and it set up in this place ;
As he should give commandment.
When had brought
Each giant labourer, on grim boisterous nape,
Trussed ; to great Gorgots delve, where he abode,
His ponderous block, and cast the poise to earth,
With sullen sob : he caused them to compile,
In guise we see, this everlasting monument ;
Figuring Nights wheeling mystic giant firmament.

When giants, and though long-aged, deceased at length,
(Which not immortal were :) I find it writ,
Succeeded in their room a faéry-folk.
'T was in a night ; affrighted by Moons murk,
Men call *Eclipse*, by Fayfolks' Seer long sith
Forecast ; who had predicted thereof thus,
In Faery Land ; (which then was on the Main.)
Last night of Earths life should be on the green ;
When should great fire-faxed star wide blaze, in Heaven :
Under whose light-sheaf, in the same, were seen ;

Conjunction rare, of wandering planets twain.
Should then, in fierce pursuit, the lucid Moon ;
By great grim Sky-Wolf HET, *be overthrown ;*
And swallowed, in last Twilight of the Gods.
Much clamour rose and outcry mongst elves then.
All who, of fay-folk, could them hie and run ;
Caught up their budgets, busked them over the Foam.
Some on snatcht broad léaves, some ones on branches green ;
Which, when they had put on their *wishing-caps ;*
Turned under them to flying quilts and mats.
Ravisht from Earth ; they over seas speed West ;
Those sail the Sky ; under dim stars they pass.
Yet some unlucky wights, unlookt for gusts
Beat awry ; and lost their ways, were such blown forth
To other shores. On Albans Plain the most,
Alight. Though some unsoft ; their crooked shanks
Mistiding bruised ; few even have crazed their crowns.
From riding clouds and wind, come safe to land ;
Goodfellows and Hearties seizin took thereof.
Each no more with him hath, of household stuff ;
Than what stived in the wallet on his back.
The Plain, when day is made, for bonnets red
And mantles blue, gay field seemed, many-hewd ;

Of ruffling flowers and wavering butterflies.
The birds are singing, the wild woods are ringing;
'T is Time of the new-leaf, when those arrive:
In Land, wherein they hope again to live.

They day rest out. Come set at length of Sun;
When evening star is seen; and flitter-mice
Wing devious forth: sally elves' chief estates,
To Council. High-born wights, on Albans turf,
They in circuit sit, under fair linden, sweet.
The hornéd Moon in sight appearing soon:
All Her, midst laughing tears, with hearts and lips,
Again salute! Sith, without let or lin;
They choose, with one consent, Dan Oberon,
Of royal kin, to be new Faerie King.
Word-wise, great-hearted, and alert as bird;
A Prince is he mongst elf-kin, of mild mood.
His memory of lore likewise, a treasury was;
Of many generations, of Earth-folk.
Moreo'er, by Moonshine in a water-pool,
Stirred by a weird night-wind; he could divine.
HELMBRIGHT, great duke of dwarves and hammermen;
(Whose stithy is sith in chine of the South rocks;
For workmanship renowned of gilded bronze;)
His sisters son; first, troth plights tó King Oberon.
The like done all the rest. Concluded was

Also, that henceforth should be this in Alban ;
New Faery Plain and fayfolks' trysting-place.
Princes strike hands, consenting all to this.
Fay People it ratify, with thousand throats.
Elf-king and councillors, after that appoint
WAKEROBIN, reve ; and MISSELDEN, magistrate ;
Both of much worship, both of blameless life.
With HAZELWOOD herald ; gruff-voiced elf, of weight,
And great estate.
Their Session ended thus :
When they rise up, cries Hazelwood, *People of Sprites !*
All, heed ! as he with lords, leads the King forth :
And faeries all drop curtseys on the grass.
Turn elves to celebrate then first joyous feast.
Lodges fay-households have already made ;
Of branches and green turves, on Albans heath :
Where having smit from firestones, sparks ; and sticks
Kindled : all go about to break their fasts.
Some call for pulse and some for mulse : is pulse,
Of fitches cropt, soon simmering, in their pots.
And sops in honey, elves eftsoon eat thereof.
And housewife neighbours, vie ; which best can toss
Pancakes, over live embers of their hearths :

Which seem shine merry as lately stars on loft.
Woodwives, thralls, bear to all round new-brewed mead.
Girt ben those only, in long smocks of grey moss ;
With garlands blue of pervinks on their heads :
And dight, with golden collars, be their necks,
Of butter-cups : and mails, for bracelets bright,
Have they, of lady-birds wings.
To gather meat ;
Did those prevent the Dawn, in field and grove :
And ranging sith amongst the bees ; which named
Be in Faeryland, the Muses' little birds :
They sought the flowery sweet, and filled their crocs;
Mingled with dewdrops. And 't is this they skink,
To all fay companies, in treen goblets ;
Carved, like wild woods diapered acorn-cups.
And every laughter-loving goblin fellowship,
Drink deep : until, in fine, their heads go round.
Twixt mirth and ruth ; elves, for late Country lost :
(No sorrow long endures in faery-breasts !)
Whose knolls grown totty already are of the must ;
Gin to nod fast. Yet once, who wake, lift that
Sweet metheglyn to lips. Ere come again
Of Sun, elves drowse all and sleep fast : they rout,
Whose heads mislay, so weary is every fay.
After night flight.

And sith, past after-dawn :
They slumber out, on small soft flowery grass ;
Long hours till lateward, in new Faery Alban.
Elves yawn, when erst is Star of even seen.
They stretch them, in their leafy bowers, awake.
So jocund rise refreshed, to merry-make.
Bold elf-swains, spurn some the flit football forth.
Some glowberds set, for tapers, in their caps,
To them, trip faerie-maidens out anon ;
With snooded locks. All on their tinkling feet :
They seem to glide, so is their footing light,
Over the daisy turf.
Wooers blow up ;
Wide-wandering, in new Fáery Lands twilight ;
Shawms some, of wheezing sound, of hemlock stalks ;
Some, grave pipes, fashioned of pilled hazel-rods ;
Some trumps, of booming sound, of wentle-traps ;
For to help the labouring Moon.
Nor few be seen,
Wend on the dance ; with leaping kneebows bent,
And lifting flanks. Who can the changeful measure
Best weave, beating heath-sod with shuttle-feet ;
Elves worthy adjudge, to cheese him a bright make.
Fay lads and maidens then take hands ; and with
Quaint footcasts forth, in their new frolic mood ;

And many a beck, towards starry choir aloft :
They tread those faery rings, around around ;
Which yet remain in sight, on heaths of Alban.
Nay, and yet is said, to linger in the place ;
Quaint melody of faerie-ditties and elves voice.
Can some ears hear them chanting, on still nights ;
And Helmbrights anvil smitten in West parts.
And pity it is, that truchman found is none,
Today mongst men ; to whom elf-tongue is known.

Much yet remaineth, if any man had wit,
(Which I have not,) to tell of Oberon.
You might him, mongst ten-thousand elves have known.
For his high looks, and his great side-long beard,
Sign of grave wisdom : which hanged, (as I heard ;)
Below his knee-bow, únto faerie-lands ground.
Two spans, his royal person was on height,
After the measure of a man : and add
Thereunto a full thumb-breadth, if you list ;
Under his scarlet cap, for his piked shoen.
But see, great-heart in little corse, ye him Esteem.
In much prosperity hath elves' State
Endured, under wise Oberons regiment.
'T was merry all moonshine nights, in Faery Alban,

When fays held revels, in each holt and heath ;
And under each hearthstone, some Puck did lodge :
Each bush an Inn, of some light or swart elf.
Dame HOLDA* paced the land, with Mothers steps ;
Causing Her dívine breath, wild fruits to bud.
Of faerie households, none knew want or lack.
Horn oft of the Wild Hunt was heard then sound ;
In chace of some swart elf, forshaped unhold,
Into the ferly form, of forest beast ;
Gold-bristled boar, or hart of mickle tyne :
Weird hounds him hent ; and would their teeth have rent,
On wild wood-mould. He sloughed his borrowed hide ;
(Some withered leaf then seemed, or birchen rind !)
Puck lightly on forest bough upskips ; from whence,
He laughs him double ; and his yelling foes,
Derides.
But sith ordained is all must pass ;
Which, neath the inconstant Moon, hath breath and being :
And cease from Life, as that had never been :
Come is the day at length, when royal Oberon ;
Long-agéd sire of Faery Albans Night ;
On his bedstead breathed forth his noble spirit :
And no more was, in gentle faeries' sight.

* *Benign Mother Goddess.*

Amidst his sleep, he passed : content he was,
To go down thus, to his eld-fathers' Rest :
Having then overlived all, of like age,
Friends and familiars. Bountiful he was,
Right gracious royal host, to come-in guests ;
That to his Court, brought tidings, from all parts.
Well loved he see them, sit at board and hearth ;
And hear their sayings, blithe lays and lips' wise talk.

Grief is in Faery Land ! From nigh and far :
Drooping along the Kings highway, in rime-dight
Tall Autumn grass, unto his bearing forth ;
Pass elves, in sad moonlight. O'er all waiment,
And choking cries be heard of faerie hearts :
Like to fowls, chiding, shrill, in leafy thicks ;
That kestrel hath bereaved, of kindly brood.
Standing in their red eyes, tears' bitter drops ;
Weavers, elf-maidens, wrought that long death-night :
To weave sad coats of grey, of wild wool-flocs :
Gainst morrows break, for all high magistrates :
That those, which their worn watchet weed have dofft ;
Did on at day.
Who hath a gentle heart :
And would not rue, with them that bring him forth !

The Princes of the Kingdom underset,
By turns their zealous shoulders to the bier.
That lately royal Life, they bear to Earth ;
Which never more may wake, now breathless corse !
With steadfast and slow pace, they Murkwood pass :
Where sighing heard in boughs, of winds sad breath :
Trees bow their heads. They enter now an hurst
Of sacred oaks, and glistering hulver-scrogs :
And loam, deep-strewed with leaves of Winters past.
There they, (soothsayers thus rede,) will lay him in
Cold clay ; where only worms and mold-warps lodge.
Elves open earth. Princes stand round, (midst whom,
Stands Goblin Hazelwood, with his old chin-cough.)
They who groaning, say last office for the dead :
Their faces held awry, in extreme grief ;
Bent twixt their knees, and under their arm-pits !
So sorrow wrings them in their heaviness.
Silent lies Faery Land, of former mirth,
King Oberon dead. The Moon hangs overcast,
Mongst weeping skies ; and so remained longwhile.
Decays the faeries' former happy State :
Being in the ascendant risen, with a wanion,
Their evil Star.

And chiefly is cause of this ;
New many-minded strifeful alien kin ;
Of weaponed-men ; these later days come in ;
In hollow shipboards, from the Eastlands Main.
Stronger than elves and contumelious ;
Those, the earthfolk pass, though less than giants of stature.
Succeeding in elves' room, they dwell in Alban.
Builders of thatched walls, bane of each fair plain ;
Plough-folk, tree-hewers, ín elves' leafy woods ;
Trees, oft-time habitations of lives'-spirits,
Woodwoses named, which perish in their fall.
The uncouth voices, which in mens rude mouths :
Full of fierce oaths, of horrible import ;
Effray the elves and gentle faeries' Nation.
And o'er all this, new cockcrows, gainst days dawn :
And much night-ringing of mens steeple-bells ;
Have vext their ears. Which fays sometime endured :
But found, they in no wise might away with such :
They have mostly sith forsaken Albans heaths.
After them there remained pale ghostly train ;
Kindred of giants, which without bodies were ;
Schrats, bogles, sleepmares : phantoms, in dim wood
And rocks those dwell ; Confusion of Mans kin !

Seeing, is their trade of life, to áfflict men.
But of the wemless Faerie Queen to Oberon;
Not yet find I recorded, her lief name;
Howbeit some boldly affirm it was WHITEFOOT:
Seeing in a ditty of olden time, we read;
Eachwhere she trode there sprang, up a white root;
Sith called the daisy flower.
If any enquire
Would more of this; I little can relate.
Save that a certain fond, unlucky wight:
Who was so hardy that he durst avaunt
Him; he could, for a pening, it pronounce:
Had been elf-shot. Colin wist what She hight,
But left untold. All ladies of her Court;
Had long combed out, like wáter-flags, elf-sheen locks.
Nor of the great rejoicing find I said:
Was made, when beauty-peerless, she was wed:
New Moons night, mid-time then of haythorn bloom;
(Auspicious night, by sortilege, acertained:)
With many gifts; but it were only this:
That she descended was of royal line;
Being, through one belsire, sib to noble Oberon.
Moreo'er is sungen, how in faeries flight;
She borne was, riding over seas alone:

On stoopt neck, of white swan, to Faerie Alban.
Her woning was a delve, neath white-eaved cliff.
In hill-steep ; where a royal manor was,
Far, in West rocks. There long she held her court :
And that was warm and dry, in wind and wet.
Her chamber of paraments, wherein this Queen sate,
On the high settle, blissful like a bride ;
With Sun-sheen golden diadem ón her head,
Which Helm-bright forged ; mongst elves, was named Moonsheen ;
In wonder of its radiant four white walls ;
Glittering with pearly stars : the carven squames,
Each over other laid, of oyster-shells.
And flower was she of wifehood, to lifes end ;
And sovereign was her skill, wherein she excelled
All hítherto, in rémedies of healing herbs.
Was chiefest of her maidens GOLDILOCKS hight,
(This find I in story ;) for great prudence praised.
Of the queens spense, had Goldilocks oversight :
Wherein was store laid up of the Kings mead ;
With acorn meal, honey-combs, wood-mast and wild nuts :
And querns, work-instruments, looms and household stuff.
Nor less than she, dame EGLANTINE was set

Over the vessel and great cypress chests,
Of royal apparel: and her daughter bright,
DEWDROP, stood in attendance ón the queen;
From seven Winters old.
Recorded is;
When three nights' babe in cradle, murmuring bees;
Brought of their treasure to her infant lips.
She the office held of Teller of blithe tales,
In the queens household. And those new and old;
Were so glad never-ending, that forgate
Elves, which them heard, whiles drank their thirsting ears;
To eat and sleep.
And was the queen a glass,
To all the well-born ladies of her Court;
And daughters in all Faery Land of Alban:
Of nurture and in all honest handiworks.
As to dress sod and bake meats; and most was,
That of elves garnered mast in field and wood:
With right conserving, of all Summer fruits:
Prunes wild and apple-thorn ripe, and bullaces.
And, of their spinning, weave that subtlest weft;
Fays use, of wool-worts gathered in wet moss.
And to sing, whiles their gentle fingers wrought,
Quaint lays they learned, óf the Queens ówn white throat;
As mavis sweet, in woods, delicious.

Elf-sheen fay-maidens, when they ben at home,
Them chant in their sires halls ; when wights have supped :
And from stern heroes brows, well tears of bliss.
For elf-kin long had war, with sundry kinds
Of birds and tree and even with great ground beasts.
Some they, in snares, gins, pitfalls, springes, took :
Other, with flint-head shafts and darts, they pierce.
This lastly I find recorded of the Queen.
One morrow, issuing from her widows bower ;
To gather, as hér wont was, the daisy-flower :
The self same swan, with golden gorget dight,
With gurgling voice, alighted at her feet.
Known then, her destiny it was, from ground to pass ;
Though ever-young, she seated her as erst,
On his stoopt neck. The swan her presently aloft,
Bare from elves' sight ; and to that blissful lake,
In sunset hills, opinion is, conveyed :
Whereas forth-faren King Oberon her awaits.
And they, in meadows warm with thymy breath ;
Being joined their spirits, in peace eternally rest.
Fay maidens sith, in reverence all of her ;
Be weavers named of Peace, at elves' home hearths :
Power of their lays to still soon kindled hearts.

From merry dream, amidst nights solitude,

I waked, of Oberon and his Faery Nation ;
Unhewd huge scantling of great craig beneath.
Crickets chirped at my feet. I, looking up,
Beheld the Waggoner now much wheeled down forth,
Amidst the Signs. Hoar shines wide Watling Street ;
That girds (great starry frost,) heavens' bournless coast,
Yet might I now perceive, in still star-light,
Dews silver drops, on tappet óf wild grass.
Not Cynthias is this light, She casts to Earth ;
Sailing through holt of heaven, whiles mortals sleep.
All-other radiance, lies on Earths cold Breast ;
Sheep-walks, where never ploughman clave the clod :
Where the wild bustard timbers, her rude nest ;
From World apart, in the heaths solitude.
Being rísen all suddenly I was ímpelled forth ;
And shortly stayed, upon a wind-kisst bank :
Where a Man-loving ruddock warbled soft,
From sweet briar bush ; and twittered in his sleep.
And I, (I know not how,) being lifted up :
Under that starry march, from the Worlds night.
Beheld-dream-City estáblished, on white cloud :
Nay and all Skys Phantom Plain seemed builded thus.
For great astonishment, almost failed my breath !

And sounded in mine ears the Muses Voice ;
Saying it that City was, whereof She spake ;
Hid from Worlds sight, above the mountain tops.
I a City saw of twice ten thousand roofs !
Great fencéd City encompassed wide, with walls :
As I beheld ; and on my fingers told,
Twice-twelve tower-gates, with lofty battlements crowned :
Conformable tó round Earths succeeding hours.
And light Dream City, of péarly o'er-shining cloud ;
And not of radiance of the Sun, received.

To one of those tower-gates, approached my feet.
And thronged great ghostly multitude thereat.
Within soul-wardens mány-eyed, I saw sit.
Immortal keepers are they of that port.
Which revolved mighty Registers ín their hands ;
Nor suffered any souls thérein to pass :
Whose names not therein writ, as spirits of worth.
Those busied thus, seemed not to mind my course.
I entered then, in Dream-Towns liberties.
But somewhile stood, where parted several streets,
In doubt which way, to hold : not daring yet ;
Where rumour none of wains, or echoing tread,
Of man or beast ; of any soul to ask.

Where I perceived some concourse, I held forth ;
Supposing this should be a master-street :
And house-rows, thresholds, open doors have passed ;
Unlike of age, of building-wise and height,
After each peoples wont. Where halls and bowers ;
Souls énter, and souls contínually issue forth.
A common thoroughfare, it continued thus,
Large sky-illumined street : (I pass unmarked.)
Which gave on Main Dream-Citys traffic place ;
Great, like some antique *stadium*, marble flagged :
Three sides were cloistered round, the fourth side flanked ;
A marble Guildhalls stately mullioned front ;
Whose ground-walls were great sills of costly stones.
Dream-souls, of all the Families of the World
To common profit, congregate there to trade ;
And make a daily exchange of their minds' wares.
Like to a fair, lo booths and tables set ;
Whereon great store of merchandise displayed.
And running up and down, publish loud criers ;
That each might take of all, whatso he would.
And give as good again.
I, only in sooth,
Might pártly survey so thronged and large space :
Where merchants handsel'd, with much-cónfuséd voice :
But drew nigh where, made judgment by their looks ;

Chapmen, regardful citizéns, now conversed.
Hoping hear somewhat, unto mine intent.
Seeing later Time, hath made already void ;
Much that erewhile contented human thought.
And many old saws, (as some men hold,) be found ;
Being newly weighed, to be of less account ;
Or else past use, as orchard boughs bemossed ;
Whereon may no man any more seek fruit.
Or walls once steadfast ; whereon hanged wights hopes,
For days to come, which lean now to their fall.
And presently I chanced with one to fall in talk ;
Who traded had to countries East and West :
And knew the Mind of Nations, of unlike
Both hew and hearts ; and more than gold in purse,
Had gotten knowledge.
Lay a mouldered heap,
In corner of those porches, where we walked,
Of leaves of books ; engrossed with antique art ;
And pride, of scriveners crooked characters ;
The initials royal purple and broad gilt :
The vellum page, with portraitures fair adorned.
But the inward, showed us a well learnéd clerk,
Who happed then pass ; and some, at our request,
Read forth : to be, for all its outward glance ;
Old gropers' still-born labours, in Worlds murk ;
Yielding, to Mans now hungry and thirsting spirit ;

Scant more than should lean diet of flinty dust,
To living flesh. My Friend, me seemed, well spake
Saying, more than all such lore, were Human Worth!
To that place nigh, I saw a stall set forth:
Whereat there solemn long-gowned hoar-beards sate;
Wan-visaged, that seemed murmur from shut lips:
And vent of far-fet drugs, upon the baize;
In labelled baskets, trays and bowls, there made.
The cryptic signs, my tongue-taught friend thus read:
Opinions diverse, *Premises*, *Conclusions*;
And other like.
To them such made resort;
As balsams for souls griefs and maladies sought.
But little was to búy, to souls behoof;
Or that could állay, any little part;
Mans gnawing inward hearts' sollicitudes.
When rose then rumour, ferment, stir of spirits:
Thick thronging from nigh streets, tumultuous Press:
Their table it was of word-wise merchandise;
Mongst jústling souls, I saw then fírst o'erset.

Of that commotion cause, and eddying feet;
Great MANSOUL himself was; to living ground,
Last night, repaired from deadly Underworld.

Great statured, but now plainly of human mould ;
He entered thus, midst his dream citizens ;
That busily do Him round for place contend.
Mounted then ón staged scaffold, He made sign,
That would he speak. Disquietly he dispaced,
A little while. Anon souls' concourse husht :
Opened Mansoul his mouth. *Praiséd be the Gods !*
(Quoth he,) *I, O citizens, unto living light,*
Am now returned, from sunless Underworld
And dust of death : I in só deep dread great Voyage.
Have in much trembling traversed hundred paths.
Wisdom and Knowledge of Worlds ages past :
Sooth I enquired throughout, in mine unrest.
But all spake darkness : prisoned had been each,
In blind compácture of corruptible flesh :
Whence, one and all, they little might unfold.
Each from eyehole, of hís small tenement
Of clay, gazed forth. The Rest, past reasons reach,
Man táketh, (whereas naught bétter is,) most on Trust.
I again, since I returned above, have sought ;
With fervent supplication, to be taught :
Seeing lurks, in every átomy of thís Worlds dross ;
Though void of sénsible life, an íntimate force :
Attractions and repulsions, not unlike
To perturbations, ín Mans jelly-flesh :
But vainly.

And diligently I gave ear ;
If háply I, in Rhythm, óf the Universe ;
Might hear some super-elemental Voice.
But to no purpose ! Far as eye may reach ;
ALL-THAT-IS, éver hangs in á vast flux :
Whereín there seemeth to sóund, aye manifest note,
Of IMPERFECTION ! Though mine every sense,
I bent to the uttermost, and continued thus :
I naught at all perceived of human import.
Yet those be the Dumb Powers, from whence derive,
Unto this day, the activities of our lives.
What though I tread continually lives paths :
The murmur of all waters cannot teach ;
Nor the Winds breath, which substance of all speech,
Instruct my spirit. Yet furthermore I besought,
The Intelligéncies of the lofty air.
But none inclined, (and be there any such,)
Unto mine instant prayer, with singleness
Of heart, breathed forth ; a favourable Ear.
Too slender, brief, mens lives, too fugitive are
We mostly apply, to things of mean account :
Where daily Opinion veereth as a vane :
The whiles we toy, on an abysmal brink.
Child of the Sky and Earth, and featured thus ;
Even he who most is happy and fortunate :

Fleets, líke some garish búbble, in trembling-stream;
To be to nothingness, resolved anon.

Answered some souls, methought, from certain housetops:
Bove busy hum of Citys market-place.

(Voices Heard From Housetops)
Purgeth each new found Knowledge, by degrees,
The Vision of our minds. In time to come,
When these days shall be old, more shall light shine;
On tardy generations of new men.
Our soul is as a bird, which lights on spray:
We know not whence it cometh to our sight.
Rockt by the wind; uneasily it dwelleth
Not long, afraid of every flickering leaf.
Nor wot we whither it presently flitted forth.
Are each-where, the same sighs of human hearts:
Shine everywhere the same stars. O'er all our heads,
There hangs one fate, the whiles we change and pass.
Little by little, Knowledge shall our minds
Unweaned, unwind out of their swaddling-bands.
Knowledge is únattainable, ín Mans State.

We at best may only see some little part ;
After short purblind vision of Mans thought.
Wisdom ; our heritage, lies within our might.
Time past, our fathers' was : this day that is,
Is ours : the Future, we ourselves beget.
The Sum of all is : there be many paths
Of human goodness, ánd the blameless life ;
Wherein a man may walk, towárds the Gods.
Till some be found new aspect of Mans mind ;
Until a candle light exceed the Sun :
Can none read Riddle of the Universe.
It passeth Mans understanding ; and shall pass.

BOOK VI

MANSOULS DREAM CITY

BOOK VI

I borne was forth then in much mingled Press,
Of citizen dréam-souls, fróm their traffic-place:
Which sued with MANSOUL, tówards the PARLIAMENT HOUSE.
Founded was that, on great white marble rock;
With majesty, of móre than craftsmens hándiwork.
A stately twofold flight of sculptured steps;
To that Basilica-like proud edifíce,
Ascended: where appeared great golden porch.
With bays and balconies, that High House was wrought.
Whereunto, many-chambered colonnades;
Were joined, as marble wings, on either part.
And whiles I gazed, I Mansoul saw mount up,
Alone by the degrees. And on the height;
There stood to meet him, councillors' purpled Senate.
Worship and dignity was in their looks.
Then those all entered in their Council Hall:

Whose two-leaved gilded graven doors were shut.
I waited; but MANSOUL came no more forth.
The entáblature and pédiment, were adorned;
With Images of Worlds former righteous spirits:
And crystal were the pillars underset:
Their gilded chapiters, were of copper-smiths work.
And HALL OF AUDIENCE, read I over writ.
Of all this, gone there-up, I took account;
Dedale, emailed, deviseful, gem-dight work:
And thence surviewed Mansouls Dream-City of Light.
Whose hundred hollow streets, twixt clustered roofs;
With towers and pinnacles, lay far-stretcht, beneath.

Meseemed then, to right hand upon the terrace,
Impelled my steps. My hap was, to come first,
Where some, men named Philosophers, conversed.
Of aspect grave; their rugged foreheads told
Of self-consuming, with self-pleasing thought:
As they that handle great affairs of State.
Yet presently it, in my dream, became a masque
Of souls which púrsued after twilight moths,
Or fireflies chaced and roving butterflies.
And each his solemn remedy straight professed,
When he had caught a fly; of human ills:
Not subject to decay; cocksure he was.

And daily, I heard, the endéavour is of such ;
(Whose idle hands will naught of Wordly tasks ;)
To arrest the Shádow óf TRUTH Fugitive.
Standing and running, some on copwebs stretcht,
Continually upleapt into the wind.
Some, climbed on ladders, would rake Stars to Earth ;
In their frail butterfly nets. Some even devised,
With their thumb-nail, to span, the Universe.
I márvelled, seeing those wise-sayers, in súch place.
'T was, (I heard say,) because they debited dreams ;
Not wholly unworthy of Mans purblind state.
Amongst them, some disputed, as I passed ;
Whether or no, the Universe confines hath :
Blowing, (sith cannot Reason help a wight) ;
Some covertly on an halm or fluff of grass ;
Enquired thereof : and they determined thus
The Illimitable Loft. And were there Being,
Before beginning ? seeing such far asking passeth,
Power of conceiving of poor human hearts.
A chamber then I entered, next in row,
With peace of spirit ; as on whose azure walls.
And bówed roof, éffigied were the heavenly signs.
Wherein lies plainly charactered, in Skys height ;
Above dark storms and Winter of our Time ;
(Could we them read. The Riddle of the World,)

Therein large-browed Nights faithful Watchers sate ;
Sons of URANIA, that bright heavenly Muse :
Whose part it is, beholding from far-off
The sovereign Majesty óf the Firmament :
The Supreme Works to Chronicle, of the SIRE
Of men and Gods.
Whilst World self-shadowed sleeps,
Till tardy day awake ; save the lone voice,
Of elemental winds, waves, water-brooks :
Gazing through théir perspéctive túbes, théy pierce,
Of heavens watch-híll ; the inscrútable starry frost.
And being their discipline, thát which only doth,
Of mens school-doctrines, stand, withóut reproach
Of tongues ; they can the eternal ordinance
Predict of times ; even poise in balances
Earths mighty mass : compute celestial powers,
And numbers supputáte ; which exceeding thought ;
Can, only in cyphers, be to mind expressed.
I ín next chamber dream-souls found assembled.
How laid were first foundations of the Earth ;
And rocks compiled on Her round rusty Breast ;
And mountains lifted up ; and Ocean depths,
Ponded at erst, were gathered to one place :
They meditate and continually ensearch.
I in their doorway leaned : and heard discussed :

From whence derived, was metal of Earths mass.
Opinion held ; chance-medley mist at erst,
Of elements, filled the Infinite Universe ;
Was Earth amongst the stars, concreted thus :
Stars mány, as thére be pébble-stones, on sea strand,
In Heavenly Loft.
Severed had been Earths clot,
From Sun ; as clay from running wheel, whirled forth.
Like peel on plum ; on molten íron flood,
Film formed ; and drossy shard was Earths first rind,
Great rains descended ; which, in clefts, pits, chaps,
Of those íron cragged rocks, to lower place,
Ran down ; and ponded in Her hollow parts,
Became vast seas ; which flowed, prevailing sith,
O'er Earths first crabbéd elemental clíffs :
Undwelled-in elemental solitude,
Whose restless wind-hurled fret of sand-toothed billows,
Lifting up mighty waves of salvage sound ;
Falling, in cataracts, on Her glowing rocks :
Gnawed much warp forth ; in morning of the world.
That aye increased was from Earths rough-cast face ;
By rushíng water-courses' dregs of Land :
Whence ooze wide settled, on vast Ocean-ground.

Where layer by layer, in cycles of the stars,
Miles'-deep were layed. Of such sith broken up,
By uplifting véhement vapours' mastering force;
Shouldered on high, uprent, were mountain-heaps:
And Isles, and jaggéd long-ranging Continents.
Who search, may read, as in a pagéd book;
In those spread, squalid, layer by layer, couched rocks;
(Offscouring of this old terrestrial mass:
An infinite Tomb:) wherein is found set forth;
Lifes Story, which of none may be gainsayed!
New threshold passed, their cheerful looks I marked;
Which in much-throbbing chamber sate. Full that
Was of swift running wheels and cranks: which wrought
More than mens hands, for welfare of the World.
Were Teachers those, mongst men, of a New Earth.
Though lamps themselves of little-enduring clay,
They ply their busy tasks; bending their minds,
To guide the skilful purpose of their hands.
They examine, ponder, blow to flame and cherish;
Each elect spark, which kindles in their breasts:
Some cometh, some come not fully to the birth:
Of thousand thoughts, that whisper in their hearts.
(Whence further Light.) They bridle, and even compel,

The élements, tó yield théir Titanic force ;
Obéy their list ; and éxecute all their hests.

By that same doorway, passed few sighing spirits
Whose hope had died, in Winter of their hearts.
I heard some of the harms, which they professed.

VOICES THAT PASS

What-though we grope and ágonise, in Worlds dust :
Séemeth éver some malignant ínfluence ;
Frail expectation of Mans mortal wit,
To dísappoint. Our days' brief season spent,
We in World of Darkness wither as a plant.
OTHER VOICES. A reverent expectation best befits us ;
And live in Faith of thé ETERNAL GOOD.
Unto even the sacred Muses rest unwist ;
The highest and éverlásting Ocean-mysteries.
Unto whom : were once made known the least of such ;
Would not that sacred Sisterhoods' golden Band ;
(Whose power divine upholds the hearts of men ;
And comforts ín rude hubbubs of the World ;)
Pluck from their crystal foreheads, thé proud bays ;
Wherewith mens twilight ages have thém crowned.

And, meekly adoring the Eternal Verities ;
Prostrate them lowly on ground, before the Throne :
And with hymn, worship, the ALL-HIGH alone ;
Who inhabiteth the HARMONIES OF HEAVEN ?

At which new saying, I turned me to hear more :
And following on, a little Company I saw :
Known by rapt looks, of soaring high desire ;
For Sectaries, of that celestial Skill.
Such aye be few, that from Earths mould durst tower,
Towards Living Light, as lavrock 'gainst the Sun :
Whence oft they lanterns, of mens ages are :
Which them, in their lean bitter-sweet life-days,
More oft reprove. Which past, too late those crown ;
Their silent hearse, with blossoms of vain flowers.
Two young men stayed, of cheer magnanimous ;
Of that small passing fellowship, on the terrace.
I gave ear unto words which they professed.
They likened souls, that sounding hear aloft ;
Some Harp of Heaven, whose chords be beams of light.
Like aged, and each to other sworn those were :
Both White-cliffed Albions sons, the Muses Isle.
Quaint antique tome lay open, in this ones hand ;
The scripture azure, with vermilion limned.

The Title charactered was, in Sun-bright gold ;
DAN CHAUCERS MERRY TALES : in Temple of Fame,
Most worthy name, for aye to be enrolled :
For the right-wise humanity of his verse.
Yet sooth to say, not all commendable is,
That Geoffrey writ : too oft he speaketh full large ;
Whén that sets forth churls' bórel talk, his page.
But he, in his high sentence, in the rest ;
Yet beckoneth to us, ín his well-knit measures :
From the homely infancy of right English verse.
Of Custance, cast away in Sea-deeps' waves ;
Long buffeted, far from land and human kind,
The noble legend was ; for whom with sighs,
Surprised be, and suspent that read, our hearts.
Chanted his fere an hymn, when this had ceased,
Of HEAVENLY BEAUTY : with soft warbling voice.
(How I admired the turning of each verse !)
Of Edmund, my lodestar, the ditty was :
(Whose Art is mine endeavour to restore.)
Hé who déscant sang, among his shepherd peers ;
As lavrock doth, which lifted up of Love ;
In spires exulteth in the Element ;
Devoid of all offence of groundling flesh.
Went other by ; but somewhat in their steps,
Halting, behind that gentle fellowship.
The transports of whose breasts, wherein a sense
Of Music lurks ; Eolian harmoniés

Might haply sound ; but that their áccords lack
Fulness of Vision, and diviners' art :
Being semblable thus to shimmering gossamer weft ;
Wafted from uplands, ón late Summers breath ;
Whereof no Webster can weave a coats cloth.

But óf that former twain, remained in place.
Quoth Friend to Friend ; mongst human masteries :
To what might we compare the skill of such,
As travail to bring forth immortal verse :
Whose every chord resoundeth human life ;
With new Mæonian lofty hardihood.
Their mistery it far and subtil artifice
Excelleth that precious gem-stones cleave and set,
In dædale-wise in goldsmiths' réfined work.
For poets flédged words, big with orient light ;
Of golden, heaven-derived beams, shed to Earth :
Be as threaded pearls of price, on living lace.
Whereto his fellow musing, made response :
Must Poet, priest of the Muses, eyewasht, dipt :
His soul in well of life ; his mortal part,
In pure white lawn arrayed, and cónsecrate :
Hill-steep ascénd alóne, with painful steps :
And fróm celestial height, draw vital breath.
And ín the Muses' garden walking sith,
(As they vouchsafe ;) gather of flowers that blow
All months ; with kindly fruits of every hew,

And simples, for souls health. And having drunk,
Of springing HELICON, their learnéd well,
Whence memory flows : slumber there fast beside,
And dream as babe, all ín the ambrosial arms,
Of Nature Mother : who his souls high seeing ;
(Revealed some moment, tó his pensive vision ;
As Daughter of the air, is bow in heaven ;)
Would pourtray and body forth, wíth the gross substance,
Of mortal speech ; broidering his web of song ;
With buds and blossoms, óf EUTERPE taught.
HIS FRIEND. Who is hé, who rightly endites melodious measures ?
(Who in his brother-man, perceives himself ?)
He, ín whose breast Love dwelleth, and Hope is left
Ingenuous. Whose spirit lifted up ;
Above cloud of unworthy mortal sense :
Drinks of pure springs, and proffers of his cup,
To all that thirst. The same profaneth not,
A virgin Muses gift, in his access.
FIRST FRIEND. His soul should be as dreaming instrument :
Whose wind-weaved chords respond to every breath :
Able, to módulate thém to human thought.
SECOND FRIEND. Wherefore be those too much to blame, that pinch ;
Of malice, rankling in ungenerous breast ;

(Which might themselves a cattle-crib uneath
Devise ;) at master-ártificers work ;
And with the venom of crude lips, deface :
Who, moved of hearts devotion, vows to Heavens
High service a CATHEDRAL. And, of World
Unwist ; up-builds, in his few mortal years ;
Of goodly stones, where naught before there was ;
Save thistles, docks, rough briars, in wasteful ground.
The site considered well, and all made plain ;
And plotted out the pattern of the Place.
His strong foundations truly laid, thereon :
He rears, well-dressed to reed, lead, line and square,
Up stately walls, which age-long may endure,
Under Gods Sun and Stars. His nave, his aisles,
His lofty transepts, ánd his sacred choir ;
Be ríghtly all addressed, towards mórning star.
His rampant gracious buttressés, upbear ;
(Each one a master-work of masons craft,
Pleasant to look upón ;) his Fanes long flanks.
The great Cathedral-structure, within rests,
On álligned clustered columns' striding arcs.
The chapiters graced with palms and lily flowers.
And the fair-laid above steep walling-work ;
Gem-like lo, stóried ántique windows pierce ;
Radiant, with purple joy of heavens light.
His náves bowed íntricate vault of chíselled stone ;
Ribbed all in metric wise, adorned on height,

With gracious palm-leaves branches' rare device:
Passeth the skill of pargetters' plaster work.

His Vow, with patient zeal, accomplished thus;
(Like as he had conceived it in his thought:)
And furnished with all necessary gifts;
To Service óf the ETERNAL dedicate:
Trembles from floor to roof, the hallowed House;
With pealing organ-tones and anthems' chant.
Whiles the aspirations rise, of worshippers' hearts;
Which therein list, sequester them a space;
From troublous traffic of the World without:
And bow their knees, unto the GOD of PEACE.
The Western porch, for brevity, I overpass.
Which builded is, on old strong rudiments,
Of Roman occupation in this Isle:
The Galilee, and cypress-pannelled chapter-house.
And there be cóntrived chantries, in the walls:
And sepulchres of saints, in crypts beneath:
Knights chámpions, in ring-kirtles laid to rest.
Without lies well-designed, fair cloister-garth;
For meditation and for quietness;
Of who those silent ambulatories pace,
With tile-stones paved; them bordering wholesome herbs,
And cheerfulness of glad flowers. In midst whereof;

A fount of living waters wells, days haunt
Of ever-thirsting, over-flittering doves.
And there be summer leafy arbours made ;
Cool havens of green boughs, with well-entrailed,
Fresh clambering woodbind sweet, and roses blithe.
Where seats for who, past years of Worldly tasks ;
Must now needs rest.

Pass other ón the terrace :
Of like aspiring looks : wont like hill steeps
Essay to climb, which hitherto seldom trod ;
With hardy fóot. On them some kindred Muse
Hath likewise gracious breathed : unto whom is given,
With harmony and form, grace, passion, in their hearts ;
To paint with hews on tables ; shadowing forth,
Visions, of their souls seeing, in Natures glass.
Nathless should many faint, amidst their tasks :
Were not when fails them breath, they wont refresh
Them at clear well-spring óf the Poets verse.

Again I was borne forth, mongst spirits' press.
And fell mongst some, from Worlds sunsetting parts :
Whose thicker air breathes strenuous vital blood ;
With hardy understanding of mens minds ;

To essay and bring to pass main enterprises.
Mongst whom some ones debated, whiles they walked :
Whether Mans Reason were, his only guide,
(Being that the measure of each Human mind ;)
Sufficient to right governance of our lives.
How might we attain, midst so much murk and smart ;
To right discernment, with a clay-born mind !
Responded one, now in his years' first force ;
Whom in magnanimous mould had Nature cast :
We, (a mote, ah ! in infinite darkness,) waked from naught ;
Till in Etérnity, whence we issued forth ;
We sleep again, resolved our fleshly being :
Should bear such constant mind, in steadfast breast ;
As may in all vicissitudes, resist ;
Blind buffets of the World and froward Fortune :
Forsaking not the while, heart-easing mirth ;
Nor looking for Worlds griefs.
Anew went forth ;
A company assembled, in a further room :
I found, consulting for the Public Weal :
Being some of those, whose faculty it is ;
To know by proof the virtues of all saps,
Of herbs and roots ; and with deft practic touch ;

Distinguish from the whole, each únsound part ;
And to every sóre apply meet remedies.
And whoso dóth most worthily exercise
That humane art, being therein thoroughly taught ;
A comforter is, in chamber of the sick ;
Ready of his skill : one who, with urbane speech,
Giveth hope for sighs and sad infirmities.
And when descend contagions ón the Earth ;
Sword of an angry Heaven and a great Death :
Those stand betwixt the Living and the Dead ;
At peril of their own, to heal, to save.
But of the event of souls released from flesh :
Can none of all physicians certify aught.

Nay and all dream-spirits, whítherwhere hápped my steps ;
Of whatso occupation they were of ;
Were in like case : even such as seemed best versed ;
In Doctrines, Faiths and Disciplines óf the schools :
Whose aspect grave and learn'd habiliments ;
Seemed vénerable ín the Múltitudes sight.
That secret sighing heard I of their hearts :
Which each day drew more nigh to their own deaths.
More diverse chambers past, I went apart :
Where an hanging balcony of marble lattice-work ;
Me a rest-place seemed, with pleasant Prospect forth.

There ín an oriel, sate men of the East,
Gathered. Some elders seemed they by their looks :
With comely turbants wounden on their heads ;
And clad in silken raiment of those parts :
Whereo'er Sun shineth, in Hís meridian strength.
Deign were and worshipful those of countenance !
That on fringed purple precious tappets, sate ;
Their countrys custom, ón their kimbowed knees :
And were of them, whom ín their Eastern speech ;
HANIFS or Seekers-after-Sooth, were named.
Mild greybeard, he to whom gave heed the rest ;
As one of chief regard, in their discourse ;
Sighed, as he musing spake, with Voice demiss :
Whoso, in his integrity, lifteth up
Pure hands towards Heaven, the same accepted is.
All made response together, with bowed heads ;
In Heaven, in Heaven alone, our Refuge is !
So rose they ; and of the humanity of their hearts,
(Their East Lands' píety,) in thát they by me passed ;
Each blessed me : all sáying, *Upón thy sóul,*
be Peace !

Midst much new cómpany óf dréam-spirits,
I walked :
Towards (nígh now), ending of that Colonnade.
And many assembled saw I to a place ;
Where a bright Arc, (made of some substance rare,

As none on Earth,) spans the large marble terrace.
The gate so lowly, it hardly souls might pass
Upon their bended knees. Those thenceforth walk,
(Left there their former fleshly seeing; that cloak,
Was on their inward sight;) by LIGHT OF FAITH.
Engraven upon that Pylon, I read FAITH:
(Therethrough I, álso have crept upon my breast:)
And came mongst some, in one poor livery clad;
Which worshipped meekly, as they devoutly went;
Folding their hands towards heaven, to HIM; in WHOM
They live, they move and have their humble being:
Intoning their Lands pious litanies.
Whom, by that nóble tongue, which they pronounced:
I guessed, to be of Worlds Italic parts;
Brothers of humble Francis, Saint of God.
They in now waste Syrian Country, of the Christ;
Receivers of poor pilgrims are to lodge.
Whom they, with bread and wine refresh; and wash,
(Full of the Love of Christ,) their way-beat feet.
Exalted were their looks; that had put off
All Worlds desíres, and málice of Mans heart.
Whose only part of this Worlds goods, was that
Poor worsted frock; which should be their grave-cloth.

Lastly, I bethóught me, of thé Great Párliament-House;
With shut-to gates, which had I left unviewed;
And terrace-chambers, ón that fúrther part.
But the Inner-voice forbade, which in my breast,
Me to range thither: saying, Eléct dream-spirits
Inhabited there; which ábsent from their flesh:
Converse with Shining-Ones, which descend from GOD.
Nor might it be revealed, what that Light is,
Which on them shines; nor could in speech be taught;
Nor such might comprehend my simple thought.
The aspirations, ín their several Faiths,
Of the dream-spirits, those Shining Ones receive,
In fiery censers; which borne forth aloft:
They seven tímes purge, ín celestial flame;
From blind Worlds several darknesses; of all dross.
What little rests, acceptable in HEAVENS sight;
They, in their celestial courses, offer up;
Before the THRONE DIVINE.
Thus said the Voice.
And I, being come to énd now of the térrace:
My feet trod many thence descending steps;
To Dreamsoul-Citys league-large lower Court;
Which ceiled steep Gulf, of heavens azure firmament.

Whose pavement all with gem-stones was inset;
Laid like musaic-work. Figuring Worlds wide face:
Lands of mens sons, Plains, Hills, Floods, Ocean-streams:
In Hóllow hólden of Almighty HAND
Amidst the Illímitable Universe.

There great resort was; ebb and flow of spirits,
On every part. Whiles I admired; disperse
I saw a fleecy shining cloud, anon.
And stood revealed, amidst, a Temple-House,
High lifted up! Not by Mans handiwork;
Búilded; but growen from ground úp, ás tree doth.
That in its symmetry, of crystal walls and pinnacles:
Of things on Eárth, móst líkeneth, in Mans sight,
Some clear frostwork.
Environed on each part,
The Sánctuary, great ground-sills of jasper rock;
On whose stepped banks, dream citizens' Nations sate,
In their degrees: awaiting, with eyes fixt;
The opening of the Temple-gates.
I marked
The TEMPLES dedication on the frieze.
And read there, lightning-bright, with awe of heart;

Large written, it seemed me by the Finger of Heaven.

TO THE THRICE-HOLY ALL-ONLY ETERNAL FATHERHOOD
WHICH HATH REVEALED HIMSELF IN ALL THE EARTH.

And suddenly, fróm a pinnacle, which toucht heaven :
Proclaimed a Seraph ; Was come Hour to cast
Up the Fanes gates : where entering all in one,
Might souls adore the FATHER of all spirits.
Albe unworthy ; I with that sudden surge
Of spirits inwent. Souls out of every Nation ;
(Seeing all their Pieties, and their several Faiths ;
Seek cleansing of Mans soul, towards Hope in Death.)
Diverse lo, of hábit, feature, guise, hew, stature !
Amidst the Sanctuary, shone an altár-stone ;
(Which navel of the living World esteemed,)
Self-luminous : whose springing beams sufficed,
Dream-spirits, which bowed them, in each hallowed place.
It crystal seemed : and whoso therein gazed ;
Might his resemblance sée ; how clear hís soul,
Or dim yet were through Sin.
I supplications,
From hundred óratories, behéld ascend ;
Visibly embódied, ámidst fume of incense :

As little golden tongues, on flaming wings.
Venerable was he of aspect, who Chief-priest,
And habited ín long albe of shining line;
Kneeled on his prayer-worn knees; and lifting up
Pure hands, presented living sacrifice,
Of all those souls. And shone his countenance;
As who seéth BRIGHTNESS óf the INVISIBLE.
I, amazed, of óne a dóor-keeper asked anon,
Of all these things. Who answered; THIS it was,
Who Friend of all, of únknown parentage;
Bearing a censer, from his childhood up;
Had in these holy precincts served devout;
Unwitting ill, in ínnocency of life,
Girded in spotless raiment. And no meat,
Unmeet for priests, at any time, had passed
His consecrated lips: nor uttered aught
Had they, that might offend, unsooth, unworth.
Unto him, in hoary age, the People went,
As to their Father. Him they show their griefs:
And he, in taking pious thought, High Priest;
Determines soon, and sets their several parts:
Through comfort of mild righteous words, at one.
I further, of that doorward, understood:
How, in twílight of the stars, him little babe;
At a dawns opening, óf the Temple doors;
The Sacristan had found, which that time was,
Fast sleeping; laid beside the altar-stone.

The watchmen, called before the magistrates ;
Had testified, being examined, with one breath :
That mid of night, with mist was overcast ;
They a rushing heard, of mighty wings aloft :
As tired some erne to Earth, tumultuous.
An aureole shone around the infants head,
Shaped like a mitre. Whence the aged Priest-sire ;
Him taking up, and lulling in his arms ;
To the heaven-sent foundling, ín his swaddling bands ;
Gave name, *Gift-of-the*-HIGHEST ; and nourished up :
And consecrated sith, his acolyte.

As he, now stooped in heavy age, uprose,
From his bowed knees ; all spirits within the House,
Assembled, breathlings óf immortal Gods ;
Sang, in their tongues, one harmony high divine :
To The ÁLL-I-AM, The ALL-IN-ALL, ALL-ONE,
The UNSEARCHABLE WHO, ALL-WHERE ; THE ALL sustains :
The outpouring, 'bove all words articulate ;
Of brief-lived souls, that seek as flowers to light :
Towards Heavens hígh hid, albe aye-shining Hope.
Beseeching the remission of past guilts.

But I admonished inwardly of the Voice ;
To a curtained door withdrew me, únseen ere :
And souls saw issuing there forth, one by one :
But none, might I perceive, return again.

I following soon without ; have nighed to place :
Where drooping shivering souls ; (as who unclothed
In cold,) stood on dark brink. Were deceased spirits,
This night-time in Dream-City, amidst their sleep.
I feared, till on a lintel which those passed :
I read, large-writ, in Everlasting Light ;
FEAR YE NOT LITTLE FLOCK : and underneath,
HATH NOT JESHUA SAID THAT GOD IS LOVE.
' WORDS, which abide, a PERFUME, in our hearts.)

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